GAIND & SHARMA

Talks
to
Teachers of English
in
India

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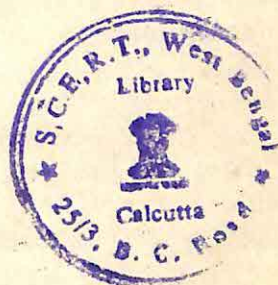*Research Officer, Bureau of Text-Book Research,*
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Preface

The position and the future of English in India have invited a good deal of controversial opinion during the past few years. This has not only shaken the faith of many people in the practical utility of English, but it has also led to the adoption of several kinds of unscientific, unpsychological, and unsystematic approaches to the teaching of the subject. The results are obvious, as even after five to seven years of English, students are not able to use the language with accuracy, propriety, and effectiveness. Even if it may be admitted that English is no longer to occupy a prominent place in national life, it will have to be accepted that there is also no point in teaching the subject without achieving anything. If a subject is to be taught, it must be taught well. There is no sense in wasting time and energy over teaching something which does not yield any outcomes.

The depressing fall in standards of teaching English can be attributable not to changed policies regarding the position of English only, but also to a large number of other factors as well. One very significant factor for the present situation is the apathetic attitude of teachers to analyse the problems and to handle them properly. There is no doubt that English teachers to-day have to work under very uncongenial situations and that their problems are too many to be tackled by them successfully. But so is the case with other teachers as well, and if all teachers expressed their disgust for the situations and did nothing to improve them, that would mean acceptance of a defeatist attitude and would lead nowhere. Every teacher of English, like any other teacher of any subject, must look into the complexity of his problems and endeavour to do what he can under the present circumstances. Only then can he contribute to the improvement in the present situation.

This book is an attempt to provide to prospective teachers of English in India some practical assistance to read and tackle

their problems. The discussions as well as the suggestions have grown out of the experiences of the authors during their contacts with students and teachers at different levels. Nothing that is impracticable has been advocated though, however, there is plenty of scope for modification and change in the proposals that have been advanced. It is hoped that this small volume will be very helpful to teachers in secondary schools as well as student-teachers and teachers in Training Colleges. It indicates the lines that a young teacher may follow, and it also fulfils the requirements for teacher-trainees preparing for any professional course.

The authors are very grateful to the sources from which they have gathered certain opinions, and the publishers who have taken very keen interest in giving the book an attractive appearance.

—AUTHORS

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Language—Its Importance and Nature

(Educational Implications)

THE IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE

Language is a very essential element in the culture of a society. In fact, it is the basis of all cultural activities of a social organism. "Each community", to quote Leonard Bloomfield, "is formed by the activity of language", and "speech utterances give us the most direct insight into its working" and play a very significant part in everything that is done. In order to understand and appreciate the culture of a human society we must understand its language. It is through language that human beings communicate to each other and share each other's thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Language is the vehicle of all human experience, and as such, is the only foundation of human culture and civilization. Without language a human society would be unthinkable.

We are not usually very much conscious of the importance of language to us. It has become a part of the various habits that we possess, e.g., those related to the use of legs, hands, feet, eyes, etc., and we are no more conscious of the significance of language for us as we are not conscious of the utility of hands, eyes, ears, feet, etc. A person who cannot use any of these organs or has lost them, realises how important they are ; so also a person who cannot speak—is deaf and dumb or is suffering from loss of speech—can well realise the importance of language though he is not able to express what it is.

The activities of a society constitute its culture. These activities may include the material accomplishments of that society, —e.g., buildings, houses, furniture, roads, tools, ornaments, machines, and the like ; they may also relate to its non-material achievements in the form of habits, beliefs, faiths, knowledges, religion, ambitions, ideas, standards, etc., including

language. No society can build up and transmit its culture to future generations if it does not have a language. That is why it has been observed above that language is not only an element in the culture of a society, but it is also an essential basis for building it up.

A social organism, like the individual organism, has an urge to live, and it lives through a process of renewal and transmission much like the individual organism. It revises, changes, modifies, reconstructs, according as situations demand, its philosophies and faiths, religions, customs, ideas, beliefs, standards, etc., on one hand, and on the other, it transmits them to younger generations to ensure their existence and continuity. This would not be possible without language. There are, however, some other means of communication—gestures, pictures, signals, etc.—but they are inadequate, and even if they serve some purpose on certain occasions, they prove effective only in so far as they reflect a certain language.

THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE

Language is "a learned arbitrary system of vocal symbols through which human beings interact in terms of their common cultural experience", and "language habits are more than motor skills of tongue and lip ; they are units of sound and units of thought established in physical form within the brain".

These two quotations very succinctly define the nature of language and the formation of language habits. The words 'system', 'arbitrary', 'symbols', and 'vocal' in the first quotation refer to four important, and the very basic, assumptions regarding language. Let them be discussed here in brief :

1. **A language is a system.** A language is a system in the sense that it is not different from other parts of the non-material culture of a social group, for example, a code of law or morality or religion. Language is the linguistic code of a society—a way of communication, a habit of people. It is not a body of subject-matter like history, geography or science ; it is an activity and it has no life of its own save the use that people make of it. Since it is a system we can observe it only when people are using it. Language is not literature ; the latter is one of the functions of language which is the foremost vehicle of all human thoughts,

feelings, and actions. Language is also systematic, which means that it works through a system of sounds which are uttered with a certain degree of pitch, stress, and intonation. Each language has its own sound system and it is different from others in that sense. No two languages are similar in respect of their sound systems as no two languages are evolved in exactly identical cultures.

2. **The system of language is arbitrary.** If somebody asked a question : "Why do we call a book 'a book' ?" Or why do we say, 'this is a book' for statement and 'Is this a book' for question ? Or why is it that the word 'book' is used for an object and also for an action ?—the answer would be : it is so because people agreed to do so. The roots of all words and the rules of sentence structure so as to give meanings are all arbitrary. If tomorrow all people decide to change, modify, reconstruct, and overhaul the language that they use and they agree to do that in any way they like they could do that, and that would be their language. There is no scientific explanation for the word 'book' to mean a certain definite object. The symbol is just an arbitrary device to stand for a certain object the people have in mind and which they symbolise by the symbol 'book'. If they decide to call a book (the object) by some other symbol and reject the word 'book' they could do that.

Grammar is the description of a language, and its rules are the rules that can be inferred by observing the structure of that language. They are not governors of the language ; rather, they follow the language and analyse it as it is and not as it might be. Grammar is no arbiter of language. It is not necessary to learn the rules of grammar for learning a language ; it is, however, a check on the licentious use of the language, and as such, has its utility.

3. **Language is a system of symbols.** When we speak a language we do that for meaning something. Our utterances are correlated with certain objects, actions, events, ideas, etc., of the practical world ; that is to say, they 'stand for' certain features of our experiences. In other words, they symbolise something that is within our cultural experience. The utterances have no meaning in themselves save the one we have given them. To a person who does not know that language those

utterances are meaningless ; they are just certain sounds. The meanings are, therefore, the outcomes of our cultural experiences for sharing which we use certain utterances or symbols.

4. **These symbols are vocal.** A language exists in the utterances of people. Writing is just a secondary representation of language—a graphic representation as it is called. No language could come into existence if no people spoke it ; but there would be found in the world today many languages which have not been represented in written form. Writing is a device to preserve the language and to facilitate its functioning in many ways. But the written form *is not* language. Long before writing was introduced, there were languages. The basis of language is speech, not writing.

Language symbols are primarily vocal ; there are some kinds of symbols also, for example, gestures, signal flags, traffic lights, etc., that also convey meanings,—but they are visual (not vocal) symbols, and therefore, are not language. Language is the most effective means of communication, though there are some other forms too, the visual symbols being one of them. But these other forms are not very adequate, and even if they are means of communication, they serve their purpose only when there is a language operating.

5. **Subsidiary to these four basic assumptions are a few others which have a good deal of value for all teachers of languages.** They are as follows :

(i) A language is complete ; the users of a language have a system adequate to explain their cultural experiences. It is important to remember that a language is complete only in the sense that it interprets the culture of a society which is using it. No language can be complete in the sense that it would be able to explain all cultures, material and non-material. A language does not evolve in a vacuum ; it has a soil provided by the culture of a social organism in which it grows and develops.

(ii) A language is a learned form of behaviour. It is a habit and most speakers of language acquire perfect control of it by the time they are six years old.

(iii) A living language, that is a language which is being spoken, is always dynamic. The culture of a social organism is never static and as the culture changes, language also changes.

Dynamism is one of the essential characteristics of a living language.

(iv) As there are differences in cultures amidst which languages grow, so there can be no identity between any two languages as regards sounds, stress, intonation, and structure.

(v) Differences in cultures are also reflected in the meanings of linguistic symbols. No word in a language can have an exact equivalent in any other language. To illustrate the point, the word 'book' in English means 'पुस्तक' in Hindi, but, 'पुस्तक' is not the only meaning of the word 'book'. No word in a language can cover the entire area of meanings covered by a single word in any other language. The reason is obvious : meanings are given to a word ; the word by itself does not have any meaning. Divorced from the culture in which it has been evolved, it does not have any meaning.

(vi) Flexibility of a language depends upon cultural changes. If the culture of a community is not changing speedily, the language of that community would also not change. The English language has changed considerably during the past six or seven centuries because of the tremendous differences and changes in the cultures of the English-speaking people all over the world. The language of the Eskimos would not change so fast.

(vii) Since each language has a system and it is a system, it can be observed and analysed, and certain fundamental rules can be deduced by analysing it—rules which explain its operation and relate to its sound system, stress, intonation, sentence structure etc., in short, rules regarding its grammar. The study of the structure of a language comes within the sphere of a linguist, and the science relating to that kind of study is called linguistics.

(viii) Since language is a habit, a child can learn it better and quicker than an adult because of the simple psychological fact than childhood is more amenable to habit-formation and also habit-correction than adulthood. Habits which are formed in childhood are more confirmed than those acquired in adulthood.

(ix) Any learner with normal intelligence can learn a language. No 'special gift' is needed to do that. Only a person should not be physically handicapped, although in modern times many techniques have been evolved for teaching language to those

also who are dumb and deaf, who can neither speak nor hear. The deaf are usually dumb and they cannot speak the language because they cannot hear it. They do not hear the sounds and hence they cannot produce them.

(x) There are three significant theories regarding the origin of language, *viz.*, (i) the *bow-bow* theory, according to which men imitated sounds of animals, (ii) the *ding-dong* theory, according to which men imitated sounds of nature as of thunder, and (iii) the *pooh-pooh* theory, according to which men used special expressions to show their feelings. Times and people change, and they effect changes in language. The development of a language is characterised by *shoots* to *roots* in that language. The root of a word establishes and fixes the meaning. In course of time, to the roots are added many shoots—prefixes, suffixes, and infixes to give them many shades of meanings. Also, when we talk about the growth of a language we mean not only growth of vocabulary or addition of prefixes, suffixes, etc., but we also mean development of sentence structure, changes in connotations of different words, phrases, and idioms. The study of a language is thus (i) the study of its phonology, which means its sound system with reference to stress, pitch, intonation, as well as (ii) the study of its grammar which includes the study of sequences of smallest sound units giving meaning (morphology) and larger sound units with words arranged in certain arrangements to give full meanings (syntax).

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE ABOVE AND SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

The above analysis regarding the nature of language reveals the following features which are significant from educational point of view :

(i) Since language is a learned form of behaviour, its teaching should start early. The Canadian neurologist, Dr. Penfield, has emphasised on the basis of brain physiology that a child can learn a language better and quicker before he is ten years' old. This statement is also supported by psychological findings, and an informant with limited experience can learn a language better than one with greater experience. An adult cannot learn a new language as quickly as a child can because in the former's case

there is greater interference of the first language and the experiences he has developed through that language.

If you want to give a child a good command over a language start teaching him that language as early as you can. He will learn it, however, later on too, but only with greater care, attention, and amount of labour and time.

(ii) Since language is a set of vocal symbols, the approach in the beginning should be aural-oral, *i.e.*, hearing and speaking should be the focal points in any method adopted for beginners. This is the way how one learns one's native language, and the same method would be useful for a foreign language as well. The natural order is : hearing before speaking, speaking before reading, and reading before writing. A person who can hear can also speak and he will speak as he hears ; a person who can speak well can read well, and a person who can speak and read well can write well. As are the habits of speech so will be the habits of writing.

(iii) As the components of a language are its phonology and grammar (morphology and syntax) so learning a language does not mean learning the vocabulary of that language, but it implies a mastery of the sound system (vowel and consonant sounds, stress, pitch, and intonation) of that language and a mastery of the structure of that language, which implies a command over the use of those features of arrangement of words and use of function words that are characteristic of that language and convey meanings. Vocabulary in the beginning would be strictly limited and confined only to those words that are essential for operating the structures. To quote Dr. Charles Fries, "A person has learned a foreign language when he has thus, first, within a limited vocabulary mastered the sound system (that is, when he can understand the stream of speech and achieve an understandable production of it) and has, second, made the structural devices (that is, the basic arrangement of utterances) matters of automatic habit."[1]

(iv) Since language is a habit, sufficient practice should be given to children to acquire and confirm language habits. Drills

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1   Fries, Charles C. : *'Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language'*, p. 3.

would be very much useful and should form a very important feature of methods of teaching.

(v)   As languages change, children should be taught that form of language which is in use.

(vi)   Rules of grammar are descriptions about the language. So grammatical rules and paradigms cannot be helpful in teaching a language. A child should be taught language first before he is asked to learn rules about its functioning.

(vii)   Like grammar, translation has also no place at the initial stages. Translation is a special mental exercise and a person who knows two languages may not be a good translator. Besides, translation is an ability that a student after learning a language may aspire to acquire ; *it is not a teaching method.* The traditional translation-grammar method is frequently criticised on this very ground as well.

(viii)   Writing is a secondary representation of language, and consequently, should come last. After a child has learnt the language the problem of writing is only a problem of transfer from speech to hand. If speech habits are good, writing habits will also be good.

(ix)   Since no single word in a language has an exactly corresponding word in any other language, it is not wise to use the method of translation indiscriminately. In the language of the Eskimos, for example, there are as many as twenty words for 'snow' ; in English there are not so many, in Hindi still a less number. The reason is obvious : the entire physical environment of the Eskimos is predominantly of snow and they use it in different forms and different ways ; most of the people in plains in India have not even seen snow ; all that they know is ice and for them only one word (बर्फ़) serves the purpose in all situations.

(x)   Since language is a learned form of behaviour you can teach language to a child by giving him opportunities to use the language. To a child you cannot teach cycling or swimming or walking or running by talking about these. It is only when he does these different activities that he gradually comes to learn them. Proficiency comes only through constant practice. In the beginning much care is needed to give necessary assistance and guidance. Later on a learner can help himself and he can acquire greater proficiency by practice.

STAGES IN LANGUAGE-HABIT FORMATION

There are five stages in the process of language-habit formation :

(i) **Recognition** (*Hearing and recognising*). This implies the stage when a child can recognise what is spoken to him. He can first recognise sounds, sequences of sounds giving meanings, and second, can distinguish between sounds and their sequences for meaning. At this stage the teacher can provide children with opportunities to hear the language and he should speak the language with sufficient clarity and distinctness.

(ii) **Imitation** (*Hearing and imitating*). This stage implies that a child hears and imitates. He not only recognises sounds and their differences but can also produce them. He might not know the meanings, neither at the first stage, nor at the second stage ; all that he would know is the different sounds and be able to produce them. He might not be able to associate differences in sounds with differences in meanings. The purpose at this stage is to give the child an active command over recognition and production of sounds. Drills in minimal pairs (*e.g.* pin, bin ; meat, beat ; etc.) are very useful at this stage. Meaningful units should be provided to give practice in intonation.

(iii) **Repetition.** This involves practice and repetition so as to enable the child to acquire confidence and surer mastery over the language material presented to him.

(iv) **Variation.** At this stage the teacher introduces variation in drills and the child also observes differences in meanings.

(v) **Selection.** This is the last stage when the child himself can select the material that he would use in response to a particular stimulus. Substitution tables at this stage are very useful because they enable the child to use the language with propriety in response to proper situations.

The above-mentioned five stages in the process of language-habit formation are not independent stages coming one after the other. They are, in fact, the cyclic aspects of a functional process, each not only leading to the other, but actually running into the other. It is important that a teacher realises their significance and decides to present language material keeping in view the fundamental process involved in learning a language.

2

Teaching Mother-tongue and a Foreign Language

(Problem of Aims and Objectives with reference to Teaching of English in India)

TEACHING MOTHER-TONGUE AND A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The teaching of language is a very complicated process. We are not conscious of the problem in the case of our mother-tongue. When we start teaching little names of objects to our children before they are three years old, or a little later when we begin asking them to repeat short meaningful units we are not conscious that we are teaching them language. The child also does not know that he is learning a language. At that age he is not conscious of what he is saying or doing. Nevertheless the process of teaching and learning is there, though neither the one who teaches nor the one who learns is conscious of what one or the other is trying to do. It is all so natural for the grown-up members of the family to play and talk with infants and little children and let various situations come up in which the latter catch the language. The habits in mother-tongue are acquired and confirmed quite unconsciously, and by the time a child comes to the age when he becomes conscious of what he is doing he has already learnt his mother-tongue and he can express his ideas and feelings to others and can understand theirs. The courses in mother-tongue in schools are not designed, therefore, to teach the youngster language; rather, they give him greater proficiency in the use of language by increasing his experiences and the necessary vocabulary to communicate them to others. The fundamental items of the structure of the language, which mean a command over the sound system and form and arrangement of words and the use of function words if it is a characteristic of the language, are all mastered by the child before he starts getting formal lessons in school. Hence it is not a problem for the

teacher of mother-tongue to select and arrange the material in mother-tongue and to present that to the child scientifically so as to give him a command over the language. His problem in this respect boils down to helping the child increase his experience and vocabulary, develop reading habits and read extensively and acquire greater and greater facility in speech and writing. The problem of the teacher of a foreign language is, however, different. In stating this we have the formal teaching of a foreign language in mind. There might be some bi-lingual people in the world in the sense that they learnt the two languages simultaneously and in a similar way. They are exceptions, however. Usually the teaching of a foreign language is a formal affair—a business of some formal educational agency, the school for example, where the teaching of the language has to be taken up with definite objectives, and the material and methods of teaching scientifically selected and adopted to acquire the desired objectives with economy of time and accuracy of performance. A child may have an atmosphere and facilities for learning a foreign language at home, but in that case too, the teaching and learning activities would have to be formally taken up, by which we mean recognition of certain objectives and working up material and methods to reach the goals. This is how we distinguish between teaching a mother-tongue and teaching a foreign language. A mother-tongue is caught, not taught ; a foreign language is taught so that it can be caught. The process of learning, however, in both cases is the same. A child is to hear first before he can speak and speak before he can read, and read before he can write.

PROBLEM OF AIMS AND OBJECTIVES WITH REFERENCE TO TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN INDIA

(a) **The position of English—past and present.** (It has almost become a truism for people to say that the teaching of English in India has suffered considerably because we have failed to define our aims properly.) It is, therefore, very important that we formulate our objectives for teaching English and then devise the methods whereby we can achieve them. The position today is much different from what it was a few decades ago. (During the British period English used to occupy a very privileged position

on the school curriculum. It was not only an important subject to be studied but it was also the medium of instruction for various school subjects. A student could learn English then inspite of the methods, good or bad. The whole atmosphere at school was predominantly English in the sense that a boy had more chances of hearing English than he had for hearing his own mother-tongue. English was the language of government, law, business, commerce, etc., and a student with a good command of English had very high prospects for a bright future in life. It was not only the atmosphere and position of English at school but also the incentive coming from social life that was responsible for good standards in the subject. The position today is much different, and though English has tremendous importance from international point of view, it has lost much of the prestige and privileged position that it used to enjoy previously. Though it is true that in the foreseeable future English is to remain a very important second language, yet it is to remain only the second, and not the first, language. During the British regime, it was surely the first language not in the sense that it was taught and learnt as a mother-tongue but in the sense that it was more important than the mother-tongue for all practical purposes in social and political life.

A lot of controversy might issue as a result of any discussion regarding the place and importance of English in India today and in the immediate future. Without involving ourselves in any controversy of that kind, we might safely state that since English has a vast importance from international point of view, and since in the present-day world no nation can afford to follow an isolationist's policy English will have to be retained for several years to come as an important second language on the school curriculum. A person with a good knowledge of English is a citizen of the world, and a good command over the language even today holds out promises of a bright future. English language has literature in various branches of knowledge which, even if equalled, is not surpassed by any language of the world. No Indian language at the moment can come upto its level, and for many fields of advanced studies in sciences, technology, engineering, law, and medicine, we have to study English. The question today is not to dispense with English altogether or even

assign it a secondary and insignificant place ; it is a problem of 'who to study English' that occupies serious attention. With the gradual expansion of education and the progress towards realisation of the ideal of free and compulsory education, the problem of diversification of curricula has acquired tremendous importance and we cannot check wastage and stagnation in education unless we cater for the needs, interests, and capacities of children varying in intelligence, aptitudes, and proclivities. Not all children can benefit from the study of English as not all children can benefit from the study of science or even advanced mathematics, and so long as we do not have scientific tools to advise a child as to what he should study and what not, and also so long as the parents of children do not feel convinced of what courses would help their children and what not, we might not be in a position to answer the question : 'who to study English and who not' ? If parents want that their children should read English, we must make provision for them. The point is very strongly supported by the position in the State of Uttar Pradesh today, and it is seen that though English is one of the optional second languages at the higher secondary stage, there might be an almost negligible number of students who might be offering a second language other than English. People know how important it is for their children to learn English, and that is why they want them to learn it.

The position of the subject today is very different from what it was in pre-independence period. Barring a few exceptions, English is not taught at the elementary school level today, and the national system of Basic Education does not favour a foreign language at the elementary level. At the Junior High School level also English acquires a very subordinate position, and in the State of U. P. the present syllabus in English makes provision only for four periods a week though in most schools they have at least six periods a week for English. At the Senior High School level English is no doubt one of the important school subjects but students' performances at the High School Examination are most unsatisfactory which may be explained partly in terms of the policy regarding the position of English on school curriculum and partly in terms of the wrong selection of material and methods. Formerly, students could learn English irrespective of the quality

of methods because they learned English from a variety of sources. Each teacher who taught his subject through the medium of English was teaching English as well and the whole atmosphere at school was very much congenial to the teaching and learning of the English language. As the situations have changed today we have to be very much particular now regarding our choice of material and method. If we do not do that we shall be accelerating the pace of wastage which has already become terrific. That is why we have now to define the objectives in clear terms before we can talk of material and methods. We cannot afford to suffer wastage and we can check it only when we define our aims and objectives of teaching English clearly and then devise scientific methods for realising them. For methods are instruments for achieving certain objectives; they are means to achieve ends and methods will always be related to the various objectives they help to realise.

(b) **Aims and objectives.** A discussion of the distinction between an aim and an objective would not be meaningful for our purpose because such a discussion tends to be more or less academic, not practical. When we talk about the teaching of a certain language we have in mind certain skills that we want our children to develop and an acquisition and command of which gives them the necessary ability to use the language for expressing their ideas in speech and in writing and to understand others when expressed through both these media. In general, therefore, the aims of teaching any language may be broadly categorised under two heads, *viz.*, understanding the language when spoken or written, and expressing one's thoughts, feelings and ideas in speech as well as in writing. The four abilities, *viz.*, (i) understanding language when spoken, (ii) understanding it when written, (iii) expressing through speech other's thoughts and ideas, and (iv) expressing through writing what one thinks and feels, are the fundamental aims that deserve consideration when a discussion is held of the aims of teaching a language. There is a fifth aim as well, the cultural aim as it is called, which relates to acquisition and development of a taste for literature in that language and all that is found in the form of prose, poetry, drama, etc. But study of literature is not a fundamental aim of teaching a language and, as has been discussed in the previous chapter,

literature is only one of the functions of language, which implies that a study of literature, though a desirable objective, is not the desired objective in teaching a language.

The aims of teaching a language, like those of teaching any other subject, are not absolute goals towards the realisation of which one must assiduously make efforts. The aims are in all situations to be relevant to the needs and demands of those situations as well as the needs and capacities of the learners. Aims of teaching a subject do not have any inherent worth of their own so as to be pursued for their own sake. From a practical point of view aims are specific activities that are to be pursued for enabling the learners to - obtain the desired outcomes which would equip them for certain specific purposes in life. That is why we mentioned in the beginning of the chapter that our teaching of English has suffered because we have failed to define our aims clearly. We do undoubtedly lay them down for others and hear and talk about them in formal and informal meetings of teachers and educationists but we seldom attempt to analyse what all that discussion means for practical purposes and how it goes to help a class-room teacher. A bare enumeration of the four fundamental skills in the teaching and learning of a language does not help the teacher or the learner as a mere enumeration of the four fundamental rules of arithmetic does not help the teacher of arithmetic to teach, and the student to learn, arithmetic.

A discussion of the four skills with regard to language learning might be useful in respect to the teaching of English in India as well. We have stated earlier in this chapter that though English is not occupying the privileged position that it used to occupy previously, yet in social and political life it has even now good 'market', if not any other value (though it has several others as well). A good command of the English language carries even now a good prestige with it and it opens vast opportunities to a person in various walks of life. Whosoever, therefore, chooses to learn English must learn it well. He might not decide to study English and choose to follow other courses which his interests and abilities permit him to do, but once he has decided to study English he must learn it well, if he has to benefit from its study. In other words, a student who has

offered English and has a desire to study it must acquire all the skills in using the language so that he can derive benefit out of all the labour he puts in and the time he devotes to learn the language. There are people who believe that for Indian students all that is necessary is to acquire a passive knowledge of English, which means an ability to understand English, when spoken or written, and that a second language, since it has in all countries of the world a secondary place, should not be taught for giving an active command of it. Such a conviction might be very true in the case of foreign languages that are taught in schools in England and in the United States of America, but this would not be true in the case of English in India, specially in the context of modern situations. We do not say that all students should be taught English and they should acquire an active command over it, but we do emphasise that whoever are taught English must be taught in such a way that they acquire an active command over the language.

A foreign language in England, whether it is French or any other language, or a foreign language in the U. S. A. whether it is Spanish or French or German or any other, does not have the same status and importance in those countries as English has at present in India, not from any other point except that it is still being used for many purposes and it has yet the supreme mono-poly as compared with any other Indian language of presenting higher and advanced courses in many branches of science, technology, engineering, medicine, etc. A good command over the English language for those who study it is, therefore, not a matter of convention or any dogmatic belief, but is a matter of sheer necessity. To those who believe that a merely perfunctory knowledge of English would give them a change to pass the examination or might help them in some way, we shall argue to advise that their views are unscientific and impractical and that they would utilise their energies and time better by devoting them to some other studies than fritter them away in trying to acquire a scrappy hold over the language.

The situation today is that a vast majority of parents and stu-dents want to learn English and learn it well, because they know that the learning of English might be useful for them. If that is the position our schools must have an adequate programme so

long as the situation remains unchanged. This implies that they should attempt to give boys and girls an active command over the English language and develop suitable materials and tools so that it could be possible. The first step in that direction would be to attempt an analysis from the practical point of view of the basic skills that they would aim at giving. We shall discuss in a separate chapter how the four skills are related to each other, and how acquisition of one skill facilitates acquisition of others. Suffice it to mention here that in the process of learning a language it would be futile to separate the fundamental abilities in respect of language-learning into any water-tight compartments. We have not only to recognise that these abilities are important, but have also to realize that they are inter-related, and proficiency in one is dependent upon, and also leads to, proficiency in others.

The general aims of teaching English would, therefore, for the moment, be not other than those relating to the teaching of a language which has practical value from social, political, cultural, and economic points of view, which means that for several years to come English has to be taught to children for giving them a fairly good command over the language : What does that mean ?

The following chart should make the point clear :

Aims

Understanding (receptive) — Spoken English, Written English — Passive command

Expression (productive) — in speech, in writing — Active command
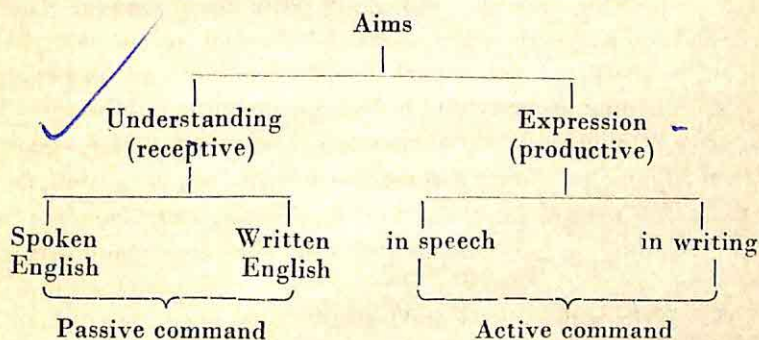
Development of the following abilities in general :—

Passive command	Active command
1. Hearing properly	1. Ability to read in proper meaningful units and understanding what one reads.
2. Associating with meaning what is heard.	2. Reading with speed and without misunderstanding.

3. Responding properly to what one hears.

3. Reading with proper pauses, intonation, etc.

4. Ability to assimilate thoughts while reading.

This ability includes the following :—

1. Speaking with an acceptable pronunciation of sounds and stress, pitch, and intonation.

2. Speaking with accuracy and fluency.

This implies mastery of the mechanics of writing *e.g.* spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, etc., and writing legibly, clearly, coherently, and purposefully.

Observing the above chart carefully we can come to a conclusion that a mere enumeration of the general aims of teaching English would not be enough and that from a practical point of view we shall have to examine each aim in terms of the abilities that we would like our children to develop. The following abilities are significant in the context under reference :

1. **Hearing properly.** Recognition of the sounds, ability to distinguish between distinct sound units, proper training of the ear.

2. **Speaking properly.** Speaking with clear pronunciation, articulation, and with proper stress, pitch, and intonation that should be acceptable, also speaking with accuracy and fluency.

3. **Reading properly and building up reading habits.** Reading with intelligence, effectiveness, expressiveness, and purpose ; also reading with proper pauses, acceptable pronunciation, and intonation ; reading loudly as well as silently with comprehension, building up good reading habits and acquiring a taste for reading.

4. **Writing accurately and legibly.** Mastering the mechanics of writing, formation of letters, spelling and punctuation, and writing neatly and legibly.

5. **Speaking and writing abilities** involve, in addition to speaking properly and writing correctly, the following :

(i) Speaking and writing distinctly and also coherently and systematically.

(ii) Selecting right words, phrases, structures, etc., to express

what one wants to express so as to avoid misunderstanding and ambiguity.

(iii) Encouraging precision, which means using language in such a way that what one says or writes has meaning, and there are no unnecessary repetitions either in language forms or in thought sequence.

6. **Translation from English into mother-tongue and vice versa.** The ability to translate is not a part of language learning process. It is a separate skill. Nevertheless for a child who is learning a second language the ability to translate is an important skill. It depends upon training pupils to compare the structures of two languages and selecting proper words and phrases to express the same idea in different languages without changing the meaning and through a similar structure. Literal translation is never possible, nor it is desirable. A rigorous attempt to do that brings up such ridiculous expressions as 'My head is eating circles' for 'मेरा सिर चक्कर खा रहा है'. As has been mentioned in the previous chapter, the meanings that we give to the language symbols and the way we use them are all evolved in the context of our respective cultures and therefore any attempt to find a word-to-word or phrase-to-phrase correspondence would yield only such ridiculous results as the one quoted above and would defeat the essential purpose of teaching translation. The real purpose is to enable students to avoid too much licence in the use of structures and words and translate as faithfully as they can, from one language into another.

For the development of the above-mentioned abilities two points in general have to be stated here clearly, *viz.*, (i) a teacher should know how and with what materials and tools he can enable his pupils to acquire a particular ability, and (ii) in what respects the different abilities are dependent upon each other and how, and in what order, they are to be developed to avoid wastage and also to secure economy of time or energy or both. Both these problems are related to a discussion of the approach to teaching English and since the discussion requires a critical scrutiny we defer it to a separate chapter in this volume.

Some Essential facts about English and their Educational Implications

It is important that the teacher of a language knows the essential facts about the special characteristics of that language as they are reflected in speech or in writing. A neglect or even an oversight of those facts is likely to defeat the purpose of teaching and also the purpose of learning by students. If an average school-going child to-day, or even an average graduate of a college, cannot speak English well with an acceptable pronunciation and intonation, or if he speaks with misplaced pauses, jerks, and jolts in his speech, or if he misplaces accent, and if in his writing too he betrays a woeful ignorance of the mechanics of writing and writes incoherently and unsystematically, we may fairly conclude that he was not taught properly and that he was not properly helped in building up good speech and writing habits. It would be a blunt statement, but it would be accepted as true, that our students' habits in English are not good because our teachers need some assistance to help them improve their own standards of speech and writing. And for this purpose as well as for teaching it is essential that they know the fundamental facts about the English language. They are, broadly analysed, the following :—

1. **Change in standards of pronunciation, spelling, and grammar.** A living language like English cannot be bound by any rigid and fixed-for-ever rules of pronunciation, structure, and grammar. Dynamism is the essential characteristic of a living language, and that is true of English as well.

Historically, English language has shown a good deal of change in pronunciation, grammar, and spelling. The English of the Chaucerian times was much different from the English of to-day, and even in the 18th century words ending in 'tion' were pronounced differently (pronounced as ti-on as in 'on' and not as 'shun'). The modern pronunciation of English is an

evolution of several centuries and to-day it presents a number of complexities. Forty-four sounds are represented by no less than over 250 spellings and this fact presents a problem of spelling too. A single sound like /š/ may be represented by several spellings as in 'ocean', 'machine', 'special', 'conscious', 'chagrin' ; and a single symbol may represent several sounds as 'a' in 'father', 'marriage', 'mate', 'cabbage', and so on. This perversity of the English orthography is surely baffling but it is there in the language. Though some attempts have been made to reform English spelling, nothing very remarkable has been achieved in the direction.

Along with changes in pronunciation and spelling, and the unphonetic spelling of the English language to-day, it might also be observed that the structure of the language has also changed considerably. English language to-day has come to acquire a structure which is much different from the English of the Anglo-Saxon period. The one special feature of present-day English distinguishing it from old Saxonic English is the lavish use and function of the function words in the language. To quote an example from Dr. Charles C. Fries' 'The Structure of English' ; about a thousand years back the speakers used a different structure for expressing the idea contained in the sentence, 'The man killed the bear' and the arrangement of Saxonic words was in the form—'The bear, the man slew' (in place of 'The man slew the bear'). The articles used before 'man' and 'bear' in that English were also different, and the language had a vocabulary very much different not only in respect of spelling but also in respect of the areas of meanings that the words covered. This change in the character of the English language has very important educational implications to which we shall refer in this chapter at a later stage.

2. **The structure of the English language is analytic.** English is an *analytical* rather than a *synthetical* language. In a synthetical language (*e.g.* Sanskrit) differences in meanings are shown by inflection (as for example 'पुस्तकं', 'पुस्तके', 'पुस्तकानि', 'पुस्तकेन', 'पुस्तकाय' etc., all having different meanings) in words, but in an analytical language they are shown by devices like the use of prepositions and function words (*e.g.* a book, by the book, from the book, to the book, etc.). English was synthetical to some

extent in the Anglo-Saxon period, but the present-day English is analytical. This characteristic of the language has again many educational implications which we shall discuss along with others at a later stage in the chapter. Another very important characteristic of an analytical language is the fixed order of words in a sentence. In a synthetical language, like Sanskrit, one could say, 'अहम् आपणं गच्छामि, गच्छामि अहम् आपणम्, आपणं गच्छामि अहं, आपणम् अहं गच्छामि' etc.', without any change in meaning and any violation of grammatical rules, but in an analytical language, the sentence, 'I go to the market', equivalent of the above Sanskrit sentences (having the same meaning) will have only one form, and any other arrangement, if possible, would either alter the meaning or make the sentence grammatically wrong.

3. **Features of stress, pitch, and intonation.** These three features of spoken English, a detailed discussion of which would be the subject-matter of a whole volume, are very significant as they are so different from those in most Indian languages. 'Stress' is the amount of 'loudness' with which a syllable is uttered. In English, there are four degrees of stress, *viz.*, primary, secondary, tertiary, and weak. The most important function of stress is to help the hearer to know which word would go with which other word, and how. Not all syllables in a word are uttered with the same amount of stress, and not all words in a sentence are uttered with the same degree of stress. Words, phrases, and sentences, all have sequences of stressed and unstressed syllables, and it is this feature of the language that gives it its pattern of intonation. There is a good deal of difference between stressed and unstressed syllables in English and those in many other languages, and this is as true of sentence-stress as it is of phrase-stress or word-stress. To an English-speaking person, the rhythm of many of our Indian languages would sound like a series of bursts of sounds all of about the same size and uttered with the same force. The rhythm of the Hindi language, for example, is very much regular and a clear example may be taken from the poetry of the language in which the length of a line is determined by the number of short and long vowel sounds, the latter being counted as two 'Matras' for each as against the former which are each counted for one only. English pronounced with such a regular rhythm would probably be not

understood, and that is why those speakers of English in India who in their speech betray influence of the rhythm of Hindi or of their mother-tongue, have much difficulty in making themselves understood by native speakers or understanding English when spoken by a native speaker. An English sentence read with any other rhythm which is not of English would sound ridiculous.

In English the unstressed syllables are so unimportant that, from the point of view of rhythm, they may not be counted. This is not true of Hindi or Urdu or most other Indian languages. The following two lines from Tennyson, for example, are considered to be perfectly matched and of the same length, though the second line has a greater number of syllables :

> Bréak, Bréak, Bréak,
> On thy cóld gray stónes, O, Séa !

Since the unstressed syllables are not important, they are pronounced with great rapidity and are virtually sandwiched between stressed (or accented) syllables. This is true of prose and poetry both. Later on in the chapter we shall refer to the problem of acquiring a good English speech rhythm.

'Pitch' is another feature of the spoken English and it means the highness and lowness of voice. English has four pitch levels which are significant. In all languages words appear in units and larger units are expressed with pitch and rhythm. To speak a language properly, correct pitch patterns are to be acquired. The variations in pitch make up the tune of the language and also effect changes in meaning. The following sentence read with higher pitch attached to different words each time the sentence is read, gives different meanings :

> 'I asked you to give me that book without delay.'

If the sentence is read with high pitch placed on 'I' in first reading, then on 'asked', then on 'you', and so on, the changes in meanings would be obvious. This would be as true of any other sentence as of this one. That is why it is said that 'it is not just what you say, it is how you say it, that counts'. The basic pitches in the English language are, extra high, high, medium (also called basic pitch), and low. The basic is, however, the normal with which a person would speak.

Intonation is the tune of what we say. It is the result of the effect of stress and pitch in our utterance. The musical tones

that flow in a certain sequence as we speak and that make up our speech comprise the intonation of our utterance. When we say, for example, in a simple statement form, 'He is going to Delhi', we start with a simple medium pitch, and towards the end of the sentence raise the pitch a bit high to speak the syllable 'De' in 'Delhi' with a higher pitch and then bring the pitch down. The utterance sounds like this : 'He is going to|De|lhi' and the pitch contour shows the intonation for the utterance in normal speech.

In English there are several kinds of intonation. Some carry general English speech, others carry emotional meanings. In the sentence referred to above the intonation pattern is the rising-falling type, which means the rising of the pitch towards the end of the sentence and then its falling to low level. If we ask a question and begin with an auxiliary verb, *e.g.,* 'Are you ready'?—the pitch level would not come down but keep high. The sentence would normally be uttered like this : 'Are you/ready ?' This type is called the 'rising-intonation'. In short and simple sentences the intonation pattern can be easily grasped, but in longer sentences with many phrases, clauses, etc., which cannot be read in one breath, the speaker or reader has to speak or read in meaningful units, and each unit has its own internal intonation. The problem of intonation is a very intricate one for one who is studying English as a foreign language, and quite frequently, the influence of habits in mother-tongue intervenes and shades the intonation of the person whose mother-tongue is not English and who has not had the opportunity of forming correct habits of speech in the beginning.

These three features of the English language—stress, pitch, and intonation—impart to the utterance of a speaker the quality of rhythm and give him, what is called, fluency of speech. The term 'fluency' in language learning is not to be construed in the sense of rapid speech. Fluency of speech comprises rhythmic utterance of a unit or units of speech with due respect to stress, pitch, and intonation without being unnecessarily rapid. Educational implications of these features of English will also be touched while discussing the problems associated with other features of the language.

4. **The sound-system of the English language.** Each

language has its sound system and no sound systems of any two languages can be similar. English has its own system of vowel and consonant sounds, some of which are similar to the sounds in Hindi, Urdu, and other Indian languages, but none of them functions like its nearest corresponding sound in any Indian language. For example, the phoneme /p/ as in 'put', 'apt', 'cup' in English sounds like 'प' of Hindi or 'پ' of Urdu but the two phonemes /p/ and (प) or (پ) do not function in the same way in all sequences of sounds. Phoneme /p/ in 'put' has a sound which is aspirated and sounds like /pʰ/ which is different from /p/ in 'apt', which is unaspirated and sounds like the Hindi (प) whereas /p/ in 'cup' is different (as it is unreleased) from its counterparts in 'put' and 'apt'. So is the case with phonemes like /h/, /t/, /d/, /k/, and /g/ which sound like 'ह', 'ट', 'ड', 'क', 'ग', respectively but do not represent the same sound in different environments. In short, each language has its own system of sounds and the sounds are heard and distinguished in the system of that very language. Any attempt to match sounds of two languages and conclude that they operate exactly alike would be futile as any attempt to find an exact word-to-word correspondence in two languages would be unmeaningful.

A discussion of all the sounds and their variations in different environments would be the province of the phonetician of a language and a detailed discussion of them would also not be meaningful for a person who is learning the language as a foreign language. What would really be significant for a foreign language learner is not the distinction between the sound of the phoneme /p/ in 'put' and 'apt' but the distinction between the sounds in the initial position in the words 'put' and 'but' or the distinction between the sounds in the medial position in these two words (sounds /u/ and /ə/). Such a distinction is based upon the difference between what is called the phonetics and the phonemics of the language. Phonetics is the system of representing sounds of a language. In every language there are hundreds of distinguishable differences of sounds in the speech of the native speaker of which even the speaker himself might be unaware ; for example, the sounds of the phoneme /p/ in 'put', 'apt' or 'cup' or in 'pin', 'spin', etc. If an actual estimate of these distinguishable sounds is made the

number might run into thousands. But such differences are important for a person who is interested in the phonetics of a language and not for one who is teaching the language. For him what is important is the phonemic difference which accounts for differences in meaning. Phonemes are sounds which a language uses to distinguish between meanings and sounds. For example, if we say 'pale', 'bale', 'male', 'sale', 'hail', 'tail' and so on—words in pronouncing which we find difference of one sound only between each pair at the initial position (and we are not concerned with spelling)—we notice that differences in sounds account for differences in meaning and we conclude that /p/, /b/, /m/, /s/, /h/, /t/, etc., are sounds each of which might have variations in different environments (as /p/ has in 'put', 'apt' and 'cup') but each of which is identifiable easily as it distinguishes between meanings as well. Such distinguishable sound units within any language are comparatively few, usually twenty to fifty, and it is these which are important for the learner of a foreign language, and it is these that the teacher in the class-room should endeavour to teach the student so that the latter can recognise and produce them clearly. These identifiable sound units are called phonemes and the study of them and their operation is the field of phonemics.

In English there are approximately 24 such contrasting sound units of a consonant nature, 11 vowels and 3 diphthongs. There are certain differences in pronunciation between the RP, for example, in English, and American pronunciation. Even in the U.S.A there are three dialects and each one has differences from the others. As we find in the case of Hindi, which is not spoken in the same way by all persons, and there are idiolectal and dialectal differences, so is true of English also, and there would be many differences between American English and British English or Canadian English or Australian English or any other. The point, however, is that the pronunciation of a foreign-language-learner should be acceptable to the native speaker and all that he can do is to acquire an acceptable pronunciation. He cannot speak the language as a native speaker does.

Since the alphabet of the English language is inadequate to represent the English sounds and since each sound is represented in spelling by different kinds of spelling (as the sound /š/ is

represented sometimes by 'ch' as in 'machine' and sometimes by 'sh' as in 'ship' and so on), several kinds of phonetic transcriptions have been evolved by phoneticians by analysing different dialects of English to give consistency to representation of sounds through symbols. Persons using the Daniel Jones' English Pronouncing Dictionary would come across the following system which has been used for the principal consonant and vowel sounds, phonemes they are called :—

Consonant phonemes.

(i) /p/ as in put, apt, cup, etc.
(ii) /b/ as in but, rub, snobbery, etc.
(iii) /t/ as in tin, cattle, rat, etc.
(iv) /d/ as in din, rudder, bad, etc.
(v) /k/ as in cat, act, back, etc.
(vi) /g/ as in god, rugged, rag, etc.
(vii) /f/ as in fat, after, cough, etc.
(viii) /v/ as in very, every, have, etc.
(ix) /θ/ as in thin, catholic, bath, etc.
(x) /ð/ as in this, rather, bathe, etc.
(xi) /s/ as in supper, custom, dias, etc.
(xii) /z/ as in zoo, raised, erase, etc.
(xiii) /ʃ/ as in ship, hushed, rash, etc.
(xiv) /ʒ/ as in pleasure, measure, division, precision, etc.
(xv) /r/ as in rat, area, arena, etc.
(xvi) /h/ as in hasten, behest, history, etc.
(xvii) /m/ as in mat, arm, amenable, etc.
(xviii) /n/ as in net, annex, amend, etc.
(xix) /ŋ/ as in long, think, link, etc.
(xx) /w/ as in worm, water, wasp, etc.
(xxi) /j/ as in yes, use, few, etc.
(xxii) /l/ as in lamp, call, gold, etc.
(xxiii) /tʃ/ as in cheap, beseech, change, etc.
(xxiv) /dʒ/ as in jump, judge, George, etc.

Vowel sounds.

(i) /i:/ as in beat, mete, heat, etc.
(ii) /i/ as in give, sit, it, etc.
(iii) /e/ as in get, met, set, etc.
(iv) /ei/ as in gait, bale, ail, etc.
(v) /æ/ as in that, sat, mat, etc.

(vi)   /a:/ as in arm, father, rather, etc.
(vii) /ʌ/ as in but, judge, sheet, etc.
(viii) /ɔ/ as in bought, fought, shot, naught, etc.
(ix)   /ɔ:/ as in short, horse, poor, etc.
(x)   /u/ as in should, wood, would, etc.
(xi)   /u:/ as in food, truth, rude, etc.

(N.B. two more will go along with these and they are /ə/ as in 'arise' 'ago' etc. and /ə:/ as in 'bird', 'hurt', 'curtain', 'certain', etc.)

Diphthongs. The principal diphthongs are the following :

(i)   /ai/ as in kite, sight, right, etc.
(ii) /au/ as in cow, now, how, out, etc.
(iii) /ɔi/ as in boy, toy, oil, etc.
(iv) /ou/ as in go, know, so, etc.
(v)   /ɛ/ as in where, fair, fare, etc.

(there are several others as well.)

5.   **The vocabulary of English : Content words and function words.** The words of the English language, broadly speaking, are of two kinds from the point of view of meaning, *viz.*, (i) content words, and (ii) function words. Content words are those words that have a dictionary meaning, or that have also a meaning independent of the context in a sentence, *e.g.*, the nouns, verbs, adjectives, and principal adverbs. Function words are those words that have meaning only as they are functioning. Though some of the function words have meaning even if they are not appearing in any context, yet they have no stability of meaning and the real meaning of a function word is understood only in the context in which it has been used. The various prepositions do not have independent meanings and it is a serious error on the part of some of the teachers who try to find out exact equivalents of words like 'at' in 'पर' (in Hindi) and 'on' in 'ऊपर' (again in Hindi), and so on. The meaning of a preposition is not a content meaning ; it is a functional meaning, syntactical meaning as it is called, where it is showing some relationship, or giving direction to a verb (in this case being used adverbially), or signalling any other kind of structural meaning. It would be very wrong to say that 'to' means 'को' (in Hindi or Urdu) or 'from' means 'से'. So is the case with articles. The article 'a' in 'a book' does not mean 'एक' nor does 'the' mean 'वह' as

sometimes our students are found repeating. Similarly 'will' does not mean 'गा' nor 'should' means 'चाहिए' nor 'has' (as an auxiliary) means 'है'. The prepositions, auxiliary verbs, adverbials, conjunctions, and several other words from the category of what are called pronouns are function words and any attempt to give them a dictionary meaning and then find out equivalents in Hindi or Urdu or any other language would be futile and would also be giving children wrong notions. The number of the most commonly used function words in English is twenty to twenty five.

A very important distinction between the content words and function words is that while the former can take inflectional or derivational endings (suffixes, prefixes, and infixes) to change their class, tense, or part of speech, the function words do not take any such inflectional or derivational endings. Their forms are fixed and they are used in the same form in different contexts where they signal meanings. There is no question of number, gender, person, and case, as is the case with nouns and pronouns, or of degrees of comparison as is true of adjectives or of conjugation in full like that of the verbs. The use of the function words accounts for the analytical structure of the English language referred to in the beginning of the chapter.

6. **The grammar of the English language.** The grammar of any language is the description of the system in which the language functions. It is not normative in the sense that it decides how the language should be used ; rather, it is descriptive in the sense that it describes how the language is functioning. The grammar of a living language—a language that is being spoken and is constantly growing—cannot, therefore, be a collection of rigid and fixed-for-all-time rules and paradigms which a student should memorise, and thereby think of acquiring a control of the language. Change and development are characteristic of a living language and the history of the English language bears out eloquently the fact that its pronunciation, spelling, and structure have all changed considerably during the past six or seven centuries. It should, therefore, be evident that the grammar of modern English would be much different from the grammar of old English. If somebody uses an old grammar-book, even a book that was written in the past century, to explain

the functioning of modern English, it would be a fruitless endea-
vour. Grammar is not the arbiter of a language, and it always
follows the language. If there is no language, there is no
grammar of it. It changes as the language changes and can
become static only when the language ceases to grow as is the
case with our classical language, Sanskrit. Though the Sanskrit
language and literature are very rich in all respects, yet the lang-
uage is not in the process of growth. The grammar of Sanskrit
is, therefore, a true index to the language, and since it describes
and explains the entire system of the language, a mastery of
Sanskrit grammar enables one to use the Sanskrit language with
exactness and propriety. That cannot be true of English because
it is constantly in the process of growth and development.
There is no exaggeration in the statement of Dr. Johnson that
the English language is 'copious without order and energetic
without rules', and good though the language is, it is surely
'licentious'. The grammar of a living language must, therefore,
follow, and not precede, speech. It is not fundamentally con-
cerned with the memorisation of rules and paradigms ; it is
primarily the accepted usage of the language that is its principal
field to describe, and its study deserves merit only from that
standpoint. We shall discuss the true place of grammar and its
teaching at a later stage in this book. Suffice it to mention
here that modern English usage is the evolution of several cent-
uries during which many changes have taken place in the
pronunciation, formation, spelling, structure, connotations of
words and phrases, etc. Many new forms and patterns have
come into existence and many old ones have died out or have
acquired new meanings, so that any attempt to teach modern
English through an antiquated grammar-book would be
infructuous.

7. **Standards of English.** The question of standards of
English requires a very logical and scientific answer. It is a
question of international importance because the English lang-
uage today is almost the international medium of communication.
It is spoken in many countries of the world as a native language
but the standards of pronunciation are in many respects diff-
erent from each other so that for a person who is learning it as a
foreign language the question is : 'what standard should he try

to adopt for himself ?'   Quite frequently a question *is asked* :
If there can be a case for Australian English or Canadian English,
can there be a case for Indian English ?   Some people would
believe that there could be a case for that because English in
India has a status and position far more important than any
foreign language in any country of the world. Besides, the Indian
mind has contributed a great deal to the English language and
literature.   Even today there would be many Indians who would
use the language with as much facility, ease, fluency, and
effectiveness as any native speaker would do.   If there can be
three dialects of English in the United States of America and
several in England and Scotland, why shouldn't there be a
justification for evolving a distinct standard of Indian English ?
Again, in the presence of so many standards of English (in U.S.A.,
England, Scotland, Australia, Canada), when it would not be
easy to choose which standard would be called a standard ideal
to follow, why not have an additional standard of Indian English
because Indians too use the language with as much facility and
use as the native speakers do, and they do that for many pur-
poses similar to those for which it is used by the native speakers ?
Prof. Gatenby believes that it could be possible to have an
Indian standard.

A couple of points have to be discussed briefly in this
connection : first, standard English is not an ideal which the
native speakers have in mind and which they endeavour to
follow in teaching and learning the language as a mother-tongue ;
rather, standard English is the standard for a particular comm-
unity whose mother-tongue is English, and that standard is the
accepted usage of the language in respect of pronunciation,
intonation, and structure.   Thus there are several standards of
English and a person who wants to learn English as a foreign
language may choose any one of those standards provided that
the standard has a wide acceptability.   Second, the case for
Indian English bristles with many problems.   If the Indians
have to have their own standard what would that standard be
like ?   There are several regional languages in India and many
local variations of dialects which colour the pronunciation of
learners and distinguish between speech-habits of people in one
region and those in others.   A person who is accustomed to

hearing English spoken by people from different parts of India can in course of time easily say on hearing a person speak English as to what part of the country he comes from. In the presence of so many diversities in the pronunciation of English in the various parts of India it would be difficult to say which standard would be the most acceptable one. The standard for a language can be determined only by the native speakers of that language and all that the Indians can do, and should do, is to acquire a standard of speech, which might be reflecting some variations owing to the interference of their regional dialects or languages, but which would be acceptable to native speakers. In other words, they would attempt to acquire such speech-habits as would enable them to communicate with the native users of the language.

8.   **The structure of English vis-a-vis the structure of Hindi and Urdu.**   Just as there are differences between the sound systems of Hindi or Urdu and English, so also there are differences between the structures of these languages.   A knowledge of the fundamental differences is very important for a teacher of English because of the fact that the word arrangement in a sentence in Hindi or Urdu is quite likely to affect the habits of students in English.   Any attempt to teach English through translation would, therefore, involve a lot of wastage of time and energy.   The following points of differences between the structures of the two languages deserve to be noted :

(i)   The helping verb (in the construction S V—subject and verb) in English precedes the main verb whereas in Hindi it follows it, *e.g.*,

I *am* going.   (English)—मैं जा रहा हूँ । (Hindi)

(ii)   The object (in the construction S V O—subject-verb and object) follows the verb in English, but in Hindi it usually precedes the verb, *e.g.*,

I am drinking *milk*. (English)—मैं दूध पी रहा हूँ । (Hindi)

(iii)   The position of adjectives for nouns, whether acting as subject or verb is usually similar, *i.e.* before the words that they qualify.

(iv)   There is a good deal of difference between the use of function words in English and that of प्रत्यय's in Hindi. The प्रत्यय's are not equivalents of the function words *e.g.* 'to' in English

does not mean 'को' in Hindi, and similarly 'from' does not mean 'से' ; 'a' does not mean 'एक' and 'the' does not mean 'वह', and so on. As the function words in English and the प्रत्यय's in Hindi signal meanings only when they are functioning in their own places in the two languages we have to teach them only through their use, and never attempt to teach them by their meanings divorced from the context or contexts in which they function.

(v) If there are two objects for a verb, the objects come in a similar order in English and Hindi (*i.e.* the direct object first and the indirect object next) with the difference that in English they follow the verb, but in Hindi they precede it, *e.g.*,

I gave *him* a *book* (English) — मैंने उसे किताब दी । (Hindi)

(vi) The same order of words for the construction—'Subject verb-object-objective complement'—exists in Hindi with the difference that the object and the complement precede the verb, *e.g.*,

I appointed *him* my *secretary* (English)— मैंने उसे अपना सेक्रेटरी नियुक्त किया । (Hindi)

(vii) The one great difference between the structure of the two languages is that in English there is no gender for the verb whereas in Hindi or Urdu the gender (masculine and feminine) for the verb exists and the gender of the verb is controlled sometimes by the subject and sometimes by the object. This problem in Hindi baffles the mind of many people in India also whose mother-tongue is not Hindi and in whose native language no gender for the verb exists.

(viii) The form of interrogative sentences also presents points of difference and the main one is that in Hindi no interrogative sentence can be framed by a simple change in word-order without using an interrogative word. In English there are two kinds of interrogative sentence forms, *viz.*,

(a) those that do not begin by an interrogative word and are formed by putting the auxiliary in the beginning, *e.g.*, 'Is he going ?' 'Does he go ?' etc., and (b) those that begin with interrogative words *e.g.* 'What is he doing ?' 'Where is he going ?' In Hindi no interrogative sentence can be formed without the use of an interrogative word, and the position of the interrogative word is also not fixed except for those question-forms in which the answer is 'yes' or 'no'. In the latter case

only the interrogative word is placed in the beginning of a sentence. For all other interrogative sentences the position of the interrogative word is not fixed. It may be in the beginning of the utterance or anywhere else too.

(ix) A very important point of difference that might be noted in this connection is that while forming interrogative sentences the position of the helping verb in Hindi is not changed whereas in English it does change, and the helping verb (in the case of English) comes before the subject but the main verb comes after the subject, *e.g.* 'When do you go ?' Only in those sentences in which the interrogative word itself is the subject the helping verb does not come before the subject, *e.g.*,

'Who is going there ?'

(x) The helping verb in Hindi is no sentence-form separated from the main verb ; in English it is separated in interrogative forms (except when the interrogative word itself is the subject) and also in negative forms, the position of the negative word 'not' being always between the helping verb and the main verb. In several forms the adverbs also are placed between the helping verb and the main verb.

An important point to be always borne in mind in this connection is that in English the helping verbs are independent words in the sense that they have separate morphological existence and they can also sometimes be substitutes for the whole verb as happens in question forms, *e.g.*,

Q. Will you do it ?

A. Yes, I will.

Q. Are you going ?

A. Yes, I am.

In Hindi the helping verbs are indivisible parts of the verb forms ; they do not have any place in the dictionary because they do not exist separately. They are like inflectional endings of verbs in English, and consequently, cannot be separated from the main verbs in any kind of utterance.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF ALL THE ABOVE MENTIONED FEATURES OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

From what has been said in the foregoing pages in this

chapter the following educational implications may be deduced which are of special interest for a teacher of English :—

(i) Since historically and linguistically there can be no fixed pronunciation and structure of a language which is growing, for all ages and for all places, and since such a generalisation holds good in the case of English, we should attempt to teach our children the pronunciation and usage of modern English.

(ii) Since the spelling of English is very perplexing we should not attempt to teach pronunciation through spelling. In other words, we should not teach our students the pronunciation of, say, a word like 'food' by saying that the symbols 'oo' stand for the long 'ऊ' sound in Hindi. The reason is obvious : the symbols, 'oo' are not always 'ऊ' as they do not represent that sound in 'book' or 'flood', etc. Conversely, the long 'ऊ' sound is represented by a variety of symbols in English, as in words like, 'flute', 'route', 'truth', 'view', 'few', and so on. In the beginning, the teacher will, however, take care not to present all the irregularities in spelling but present only such words as show regularity of spelling and pronunciation. This means that presentation of sounds with regular spelling as in 'but', 'hut', 'cut', etc., (not put) and presentation of spelling with the same sounds e.g. 'sit', 'hit', 'bit', and so on will take precedence over presentation of words with irregular spellings and sounds with irregular symbols. Phonetic transcription has a value in this respect but if situations do not permit, teachers need not teach that to students. But he must know some kind of transcription to improve his own speech habits and to correct students'.

(iii) The structure of English reveals that it is different from the structure of Hindi or Urdu or any other Indian language. Any attempt to teach the structure of English (which means the English usage) through translation would be a wrong approach. We shall talk about the limitations of the translation method in the next chapter. Suffice it to mention here that translation is not a device to teach a second language ; it is rather an ability, a skill that can be acquired separately after a person has learned two languages.

(iv) When we talk about the structure of English we are concerned principally with three things *viz.* (i) form of words *i.e.*

the different forms that words take as a result of inflectional and derivational endings, to give meaning in a certain utterance, (ii) arrangement of words in an utterance to give meaning, and (iii) the use of the function words. The most important point to remember in this connection is that the full meaning of an utterance is clear only when one knows the meanings of the content words in that utterance and also when one knows the meanings that are signalled by the devices of form of words, arrangement of words and the use of the function words in that utterance. The latter meanings are, what may be called, the structural meanings and they are the province of grammar. How the structure itself has a meaning by itself and how even a sentence with non-sense words but satisfying the principles of English structure has a meaning may be illustrated by borrowing the following example from Charles C. Fries :

'The vapy koobs dasacked the citar molently'. In this sentence the words, 'vapy', 'koobs', 'dasacked', 'citar' and 'molently' do not have any lexical meanings ; they are just non-sense words, but surely their order and forms convey some meaning giving an idea of some action performed in the past, (as the word 'dasacked' shows with it inflection-'ed') by somebody symbolised by 'koobs' (most probably several of them because of the plural ending-'s' in 'koobs'), the effect of action having fallen on 'citar' (whatever it might be) in a way signified by 'molently'. The order of words explains that 'koobs' is the doer, 'vapy' is its adjunct, and 'molently' with its inflection-'ly' and its position is surely modifying the action word, 'dasacked'.

To conclude, therefore, the structures are the basic units—the moulds—that constitute the framework of the language, and if they are selected and graded properly, and are operated with the minimum vocabulary that is needed, they would constitute scientific material to the learners at the initial stages. If a student knows many words but does not know how to use them to make meaningful utterances he cannot use the language ; on the contrary, if he knows the structures—the correct usage of the language, which means if he has a knowledge of the word-arrangements and their forms—he will be able to use the language even though his vocabulary might be limited. This is the linguistic evidence to support the structural approach and

it has a great value and significance for the teacher of a language, whether a native language or a foreign tongue. This is how a person learns his native language and this is the surest approach to teaching and learning a foreign language. It should, however, be borne in mind that the structural approach is basically an approach, a matter of principles, and not of techniques. The latter are the field of methodology, and we shall refer to them in the next chapter.

(v) To help children build up good speech habits, it is essential that they are given plenty of drill work in speaking the language with proper intonation. The rhythm of the English language is, in many respects, different from that of Hindi or Urdu or any other Indian language. The teacher should, therefore, give students systematic practice in intonation patterns. It is for this purpose that emphasis from the very beginning is to be laid on learning to speak English utterances in short speech-units or, if the sentences are long, in meaningful units. English is a highly accented language in which the rhythm of any utterance consists in giving proper emphasis to stressed syllables and weakening unstressed words and syllables, obscuring the vowels in most of them. The problem of acquiring good speech-habits in English cannot, therefore, be solved by teaching the pronunciation of words in isolation. It is a problem of emphasising the stressed and weakening the unstressed syllables, of giving proper pauses in speech by organising words into proper meaningful units or thought groups, of blending the final sounds of each word with the sound of the word that follows, and finally of fitting the whole utterance into a normal intonation pattern. For achieving this purpose—

(a) The language material should be presented in whole sentences, *i.e.* complete utterances.

(b) Short sentences should be taken up in the beginning.

(c) Regular, and not irregular, patterns should be selected for the beginners.

(d) Accuracy and fluency in speech should be aimed at from the very beginning.

(e) Plenty of drill-work is necessary for that purpose.

(Teacher's own pronunciation, his ability to train the ears of pupils and to correct their errors, and selection of suitable

exercises—these are important for achieving the above objectives.)

This aspect also emphasises the importance of the aural-oral focus in the beginning and sets aside the claims of translation, grammar, use of text-books, reading, and writing for being included in the programme of work. The purpose is to teach the items of language and have the students master them orally before they are asked to write or read them in a text-book.

(vi) For teaching children the vowel and consonant sounds and enabling them to make distinctions the use of minimal pairs deserves mention. A minimal pair is a pair of two words which differ in respect to one single phoneme in the same position, *e.g.*,

> pin, bin ; jug, bug
> I see a jug *vs*. I see a bug,
> I have a jug *vs*. I have a rug,
>
> (and so on).

(vii) The vocabulary of English consists of two kinds of words as mentioned earlier in this chapter. The teacher should never attempt to teach function words by trying to find their equivalents in the learner's mother-tongue because they do not exist. Function words are the components of the structure of the language and hence it is only through their use that they can be taught. The question of selection of their functional meanings and fixing priority is important. Shall we teach them, for example, the use of the word 'at' in the construction,—'He is laughing at me' or shall we teach them the use of 'at' in the construction—'He is at home in Mathematics ?' Shall we teach them the use of the word 'under' in the construction,—'The book is under the table', or in the construction—'He is under the weather ' (meaning 'he is indisposed'). Surely, it is the former use in each case that will be taken up first.

(viii) The matter of selection and gradation of material— whether it is for pronunciation or spelling or structure or vocabulary or meanings or composition or any other aspect of language—is very important. On one hand is the psychology of learning that will help the teacher, and on the other is the result of the investigations and studies carried on in the field of the linguistic science. No arbitrary criterion should outweigh the scientific approach though an intelligent and imaginative teacher's judgment will play a very significant role.

Even in teaching the content words the device of translation would not be useful because there is no exact word-to-word correspondence in any two languages. However, for giving some of the meanings the translation device may be useful. Other devices are, for example, the use of visual aids, demonstrations, explanations, use in contexts and several others to which we shall give attention when we talk about the teaching of literature at a later stage in this volume.

(ix) Since a living language is always in the flux of growth, no attempt should be made for the teaching of formal grammar. This statement does not completely defeat the purpose of teaching formal grammar which is necessary for the students to learn, but only at a later stage when they have learnt the language.

(x) The question of standards has been discussed with reference to several standards of English observable in the speech of the native speakers. Teachers and learners in India can choose any one of them provided that it is widely acceptable. As mentioned earlier, standard English in the sense that there is a certain standard to which even native speakers also aspire, is a non-entity. A standard in any language is one that is in practice and has acquired some stability with, and wider acceptance of, native speakers. The standard in pronunciation in a language is a certain range within which there would be many idiolectal variations. No two persons' manner of speaking is alike, and consequently, no rigidly fixed standard exists.

(vi) Lastly, since the structure of no two languages is similar, and since speech-habits in mother-tongue are sure to influence and interfere with the acquisition of language-habits in a foreign language, the teacher should know how that interference baulks his path and impedes progress. He should know the differences between the sound-systems and structures of the learners' native language and the language he is teaching. This would enable him to spot out the difficulties of students and to help them in acquiring correct speech habits. A Hindi-speaking boy is likely to substitute 'थ' for /θ/ as in 'think' and 'भ' or 'व' for /v/ as in 'very'. If the teacher knows the difference he can help the student in recognising the difference and not getting confused between the two.

'Language is speech, and speech is the language.'

4

A Survey of Methods of Teaching in General with Special Emphasis on "Structural Approach"

A discussion of the methods of teaching any subject should always be relevant from the point of view of the relationship between aims and methods. The latter are only means to attain certain educational objectives ; they are never ends in themselves. When we evaluate any method critically we have always certain aims in mind which we wish to realise and if we stress the inadequacy of a certain method we do that only because of its incapability to assist in the realisation of those aims. No method is by itself good or bad. To take an example, in the teaching of English as a foreign language quite often we feel that the translation method does not work well. It is not because the translation method is inherently defective, for it does work well under certain situations (read ahead), but because we have certain objectives in mind—a certain kind of growth in the child—which the translation method does not help to fulfil. The same argument may be pushed forward to support the oral approach in the initial stages, and we favour the approach not because it has some irrevocable values attached to it, but because it has been experimentally, and through research, found useful to help us in obtaining the desired outcomes. A survey of methods of teaching should, therefore, be useful only in relation to the objectives that they are supposed to fulfil and that they do or do not fulfil.

Another point that merits attention in a discussion of methods relates to the nature of a method. No person can prescribe a method of teaching to any other person. The best method is one that works well with a teacher, that is to say, that helps him to realise the goals he has in his mind. One teacher might use a method successfully, another might not. One method might work well under one kind of situation and with one kind of

students ; it might not work under different kinds of situations and other kinds of students. Good teachers will impart knowledge and stimulate thought largely according to their native genius but there are, nevertheless, bad ways and good ways of teaching anything—"futile muddling, sterile cramming, dreary droning, on the one hand ; live, well organised, imaginative presentation and reasoned activity, on the other. The good ways are presented to the young teacher not as the final classroom techniques for him, but as qualitative standards by which he may judge his own efforts".[1] Judged from this standpoint a method of teaching would be a tool to help the teacher in his job ; it would not be a legal dictum that could not be modified or changed to suit individual conditions and situations.

The general objectives at the secondary school level, that have been emphasised in the teaching of English may be briefly outlined before we take up an examination of the methods used so far, so that we might examine them against the background of those objectives. They are as follows :—

1. Enabling pupils to hear English and understand what they hear.

2. Enabling them to respond to what they hear and communicate effectively.

3. Enabling them to read with understanding and develop an effective vocabulary.

4. Helping them to acquire a standard of pronunciation that is acceptable.

5. Enabling them to use the language in speech and writing with economy, precision, and propriety.

6. Helping them to acquire a taste for reading.

7. Assisting them to acquire an ability to compare the structures of their native language and English and to develop the skill to translate.

Let us now turn to a discussion and a critical appraisal of the methods used to achieve the above objectives.

THE TRANSLATION-GRAMMAR METHOD

The traditional method of teaching a foreign language and the one that was also widely used in India is what is called the

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1   Castle E. B., *People in School*, p. 152-153.

Translation-Grammar method. The method has not so much of a psychological basis as a philosophical one which holds that a foreign language can be taught economically and conveniently by using the mother-tongue of the learners and by teaching them the grammar of the language. This method was very popular during the days when English had a very superior position in the school curriculum, and it is used by many teachers even to this day. As students could learn English during those days, many teachers of the older generation believe that they can learn it even to-day through the traditional approach. To them it is obvious that if there is any deterioration in the standards of English it is due to the scant attention devoted to the teaching of English grammar. Why and how did students in the old days learn English ?—is a question to which several answers would be found ; but the most significant from the point of view of instruction is the fact that students could learn English in those days irrespective of the suitability or unsuitability of methods. Every teacher was at that time to some extent a teacher of English as the medium of instruction for several subjects even at the high school stage was English, and students had far more opportunities to hear and use English in other classes than they had in the English class. Situations are changed today and we find that in most schools students do not have any opportunities to hear and use English except in the English class, and if the translation method is used they do not have any chance to use English even in the English class. The limitations of the Translation-Grammar method may be briefly analysed as follows :

1. There is no exact word-to-word correspondence in any two languages ; hence the approach through translation is not only inadequate but also inaccurate. For example, 'मेज' is one meaning of the word 'table' but 'table' does not mean 'मेज' only. Since the material of any language—vocabulary, idioms, phrases, etc.—is evolved in the culture of the native speakers it is not possible to find out matching equivalents for each one of them in other languages. No language is perfect to interpret all cultures and all environments as its nature and human beings in different parts of the world would like it to do.

2. Since the thoughts, feelings, surroundings, natural environments, and customs, etc., of one nation speaking any

language differ from those of others, it is not possible to translate them in other languages. All meanings are interpretations of the culture of a community and symbols are just devices to communicate the meanings. The symbols are not possessors of meanings ; they are, rather, instruments through which meanings are communicated. In one culture the word 'lunch' may symbolise a meaning which might be different from the meaning that it might derive in another culture. To an American, 'lunch' is a very 'light meal' ; to an average Indian it means usually a heavy meal after which a half-hour rest seems almost essential.

3. The structures of no two languages would be similar and, consequently, the technique of teaching through translation would surely delay the process of learning the structure of a foreign language.

The translation method is, therefore, most unsuitable for teaching a foreign language. It is unnatural because it does not help children to learn the foreign language as they learnt their mother-tongue ; it is uninteresting because it over-emphasises the learning of meanings without giving command to use the language ; it is unscientific because it assumes that the vocabulary and idiom of a language can be explained through the native language of the learner ; and lastly, it is uneconomical because it does not yield results commensurate with the labour put in.

4. The approach to a language through its grammar is most fallacious if by grammar we mean a set of rules and paradigms governing the structure of the language. The grammar of a language is a description of the language—something about the language, and evidently, it can have a place only after, and not before, the language. You have to know the thing itself first before somebody talks to you about that thing. Formal grammar does have a place and value, but only after a student has learnt the language. How can one teach one's students, say, 'parts of speech' when they do not have the 'speech' itself. Language first, and grammar afterwards.

The Translation-Grammar method is not favoured these days because of its weaknesses referred to above. The method, however, has certain good features too, and in senior classes it is found sometimes very useful to explain complex ideas or abstract thoughts and meanings. It is under such conditions very

economical too. But at the initial stages it does not serve the desired purposes and is, therefore, most unsuitable. Recognition and identification of sounds, practice in speech, acquiring confidence in speaking, are some of the important objectives at the initial stages which the translation method is unqualified to fulfil. Even at the senior stage it is not very useful and should be used only when it can be scientifically and economically used. Translation is not a device for teaching ; rather, it is a separate intellectual exercise and ability. Evidently, it should be taken up after a student has learnt the language. All must agree that to acquire fluency in speech in any language a person must think in that language. Translation interferes, rather than facilitates, the process of thinking in the second language. It should, therefore, be avoided as far as possible. A living language cannot be taught through the translation or the grammar method. One can learn cycling only by learning to ride it, and one can learn a language only by learning to use it. Language is a set of habits of vocal symbols and language habits are formed not by learning about the habits, but by practising them.

THE DIRECT METHOD

The Direct Method of teaching a foreign language came as a reaction against the Translation-Grammar Method (which was an indirect method) and the exponents of the Direct Method held that a language, whether it was the speaker's native language or a foreign language, was best learnt by following the natural order. That is why the early advocates of the Direct Method called it the 'Natural Method'. They suggested that the learner should acquire the new speech in the same manner in which he learnt his native language. The term 'Natural Method', however, made an assumption of a similarity which went beyond the mark, because the opportunities and atmosphere of the class are not obviously the same for the learner's native language and the foreign language he seeks to learn. Consequently, the term 'Natural Method' was dropped, and the method came to be called 'the Direct Method' by reformers. Though the Direct Method uses the same techniques as presupposed by the 'Natural Method', yet it assumes that opportunities and atmosphere in the case of

a foreign language are much more limited at school than they are in the case of the native language.

Objectives aimed at. The Direct Method of teaching a foreign language aims at giving the learner an active command over the language, which means :

1. Facility in understanding English, whether spoken or written, by bridging the gap between the symbol and the object, idea, situation, or thought, etc., symbolised. If the learner hears or sees a symbol or a set of symbols (a whole utterance), he gets the idea without translating it into his native language. It is thus establishing a direct association between experience and expression—'a fusion of linguistic symbol with the thing symbolised' as Champion calls it.[1]

2. Fluency in speech and ease in writing by enabling pupils to acquire a command over the active use of language. Fluency in speech means acquisition of correct speech habits, speaking the language with an acceptable standard of pronunciation and intonation ; ease in writing means an ability to write coherently, correctly, and effectively on one hand, and a mastery over the mechanics of writing on the other.

Basic assumptions. The advocates of the Direct Method assume that :

(i) the objectives mentioned above cannot be realised by adopting the Translation-Method, and that the direct approach only can lead the student to acquire an active command over the language ;

(ii) to give an active command to pupils it is essential to make the gap between the active and the passive vocabulary of the learners as narrow as possible. This done, self-expression would be surely realised ;

(iii) the basis of language is speech ;

(iv) a learner of a foreign language learns the language best only when the approach is direct, *i.e.* when speaking is taught by giving him opportunities to speak, reading by opportunities for reading, and so on.

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[1] 'To develop in our pupils that instinctive, unerring, language sense which we all possess in varying degrees in the mother-tongue and which superseding all rules of grammars and dictionaries, resting at bottom on the direct association between experience and expression is the only sure guide in the use of a language'.—*Lectures on the Teaching of English in India.*

Principles underlying the Direct Method. Basic principles of the Direct Method are enlisted below :—

1. **Emphasis on purely oral work in the beginning.** Since the basis of language is speech, it is important that an attempt is made to help children build up good speech-habits. Good speech-habits are the basis for good writing habits.

2. **Use of the foreign language from the very beginning.** The use of mother-tongue intervenes with, rather than facilitates, the learning of a foreign language. Good speaking is the result of good hearing, and if the children do not hear the language, they cannot speak it. Besides, the use of mother-tongue destroys the desirable atmosphere in the class-room, and children do not get the necessary stimulus to use the foreign language. The extreme view would be in favour of banishment of mother-tongue from the class-room, but since on certain occasions it has to be used, a balanced view would be to inhibit, rather than to banish, the mother-tongue.

3. **Extensive use of audio-visual** material to illustrate the life, customs, geography, history, literature, etc., of the foreign nation whose language is to be taught. The best atmosphere for learning a language is the one provided by the natural and social environment of the country itself of which the language is taught, but since this is not possible, the teacher of a foreign language might do his best to create an artificial setting and atmosphere through the use of pictures, models, charts, posters, diagrams, etc., to establish relationship between the linguistic symbols and the things, objects, ideas, etc., that they represent. This is to create the proper atmosphere in class-room on one hand, and to avoid the use of mother-tongue on the other.

4. **Teaching grammar inductively.** The Direct Method does not stress the necessity of teaching formal grammar in the beginning, though it holds that it has to be taken up at a later stage. The method to be adopted for teaching formal grammar would be inductive and not deductive. Grammar should be taught inductively and applied deductively.

Techniques of the Direct Method. Principles are the broad rules or laws that govern the course of action ; techniques are the tricks or tools that are used to direct and control action.

The main techniques employed by teachers using the Direct Method are as follows :

   (i)   Constant conversation with students.

   (ii)   Helping them to speak the language all the time in the course of conversation.

   (iii)   Giving them necessary assistance as they falter, fumble, or stammer.

   (iv)   Proceeding from simple concrete words and ideas to the abstract ones.

   (v)   Emphasising original composition, oral and written, in the foreign language without any previous thought of the form of expression in the native language.

   (vi)   Using 'look-and-say' method for teaching reading, and helping children to read.

   (vii)   Using the reader for teaching grammar and thus correlating the teaching of grammar with text.

   (viii)   No translation in the beginning.

Limitations of the Direct Method. The Direct Method of teaching a foreign language became very popular, at least with educational thinkers, if not with many class-room teachers, not because the latter did not believe in its worth but probably because most of them could not use it. The method places very heavy demands upon the teachers. No teacher, who is not himself proficient in the use of the language and who is not sufficiently imaginative and resourceful, can use the Direct Method. The Translation-Method, though never effective, is a very convenient method and teachers use it not because they believe it might work, but because they know that each one of them can use it in any situation.

The main limitations of the Direct Method, however, do not relate to the principles behind it, but rather, to some of the essential aspects of a scientific approach to a language, which the method either omits or overlooks. They are as follows :

   (i)   No attempt was made until quite recently to select and grade the material—vocabulary and structure—for purpose of teaching.

   (ii)   It is not possible to teach all items of English language—idioms, phrases, etc.—according to the Direct Method.

   (iii)   A difficulty arises in the case of abstract ideas and

thoughts. How to explain words like 'kindness', 'justice', or 'goodness', etc., by using the Direct Method ?

(iv)   The method belittles the utility of Translation Method. The Direct Method of teaching English in India has been found very successful by those who have used it intelligently, and under the present circumstances when the greatest economy is to be effected by saving labour and time in teaching English, only that method can work well that is most scientific in its approach. As such, the Direct Method with greater care as regards the selection and gradation of material, and the fixing of priorities in the objectives of teaching English would go a long way to help a prospective teacher of English.

(3)   **Different approaches to language.**   A discussion of the various approaches to a language might well start with a discussion of the difference between 'an approach' and 'a method'. When we talk about an approach we have in mind the system of the language and how it operates. We set to distinguish between the fundamentals and non-fundamentals, and also determine on the basis of our knowledge of psychology of teaching and learning, and also the conclusions of the science of linguistics, (in the case of a language) what kinds of abilities and skills are the bases and to what skills and abilities they lead. In the teaching of a language, for example, we feel certain that good hearing leads to speaking, and good speaking to good reading and writing. We also know that the speech-unit is not one word but a group of words, a short sentence, and that by teaching words in isolation we cannot help a learner to acquire an ability to use the language effectively. Such conclusions and investigations determine our fundamental approach to a language, and we define, first of all, the objectives that we seek to realise, fix up the priorities in those objectives, choose the kind of material that will help us to realise those objectives, improvise the kind of other supplementary material, and decide whether we shall attack the problem by starting with the vocabulary of the language, or the grammar, or the structure, or through any other aspect. Our supreme aim is to enable the child to acquire a command over the language so that he can use it effectively in all situations. The approach to the realisation of the objectives will determine the sequence of learning experiences we provide and the steps we follow. Methods

are the tools that we use at each step to realise the immediate objectives so that we reach the final goal. Our approach to a language might start by attacking the problem of the vocabulary of that language, but we might use different methods to teach that vocabulary. We might attempt to do that through the translation technique or the direct technique which again involves several sub-techniques. Similarly, our approach to the language might be through presenting the language material through the basic structures of the language, but our methods of presentation might be different. We might, for example, use the aural-oral method and not use any text-book, or we might use a text-book or we might use the translation technique, or we might have a composite technique by mixing two or three techniques, and so on. An 'approach' is evidently more related to broad principles whereas a 'method' is more concerned with the practices in teaching. However, though for the sake of analysis they can be separated, in functioning they go together and supplement each other.

1. **The vocabulary-approach.** Some people believed that a language could be mastered by learning the vocabulary of that language. Such a belief no longer exists now. One cannot learn to use a language by learning all the words in a dictionary of that language. The content meaning of words is no doubt very essential to know. In any utterance words appear in a certain order (and this is true of all analytical languages) and the meaning of the utterance can be understood only by knowing the meanings of words and also the meanings signalled by the order, arrangement, and form of words. The vocabulary approach is, therefore, inadequate, and it must be supplemented by another approach. Besides, the meanings of words learnt separately do not provide any clue to learning the meanings of those words when they make idioms or compound words ; *e.g.*, the meanings of 'cats' and 'dogs' learnt separately do not enable one to understand the meaning of 'raining cats and dogs'. Similarly the meanings of 'black' and 'bird' do not give the meaning of a 'black-bird'. Many examples might be furnished to disprove the utility of the vocabulary approach, and in a language like English in which many words have only functional meanings (the function-words referred to previously) the voca-

bulary approach is also not practicable. A further difficulty arises by deciding to follow the vocabulary approach which is, that if the vocabulary approach is to be followed, how shall we select and grade the vocabulary ? Though there have been several attempts to prepare vocabulary lists for different grades, none of them, is convincing enough to be used at all places, specially in a vast country like India. There is no doubt that a basic vocabulary list would be useful for many states in the country, but that does not presume that vocabulary would be the main item to be taught first.

2. **The approach through reading and writing.** Another approach to a language might start with teaching children the alphabet of the language, then the spelling, and then reading and writing simultaneously. This approach was widely adopted in India and the teachers who used the translation-grammar method found it extremely workable. Some people also believed that for a bilingual child all that is necessary is to acquire a passive command over the foreign language which means the ability to understand English when spoken or written. Dr. Michael West, formerly Principal of the Teachers' Training College at Dacca, believed that a command of English could be got only at the expense of mother-tongue. The sacrifice in that case would be too much because 'one who forgets his mother-tongue forgets himself'. He, therefore, emphasised that 'the essential need of the bilingual child of a minor language is simply that of reading ability in one of the major languages to supply the informational and scientific deficiencies of his national literature'. Dr. West prepared his New-Method Readers also keeping this aim in view.

Dr. West's argument is expressed in his book 'Bilingualism' and he quotes some statistics of Bengali-speaking persons in support of his argument to show that the Bengali boy does not so much need to speak the foreign language as to read it.

The argument of Dr. West, sound though it might appear in the context of a certain situation, is not tenable when we look at the problem of the process of learning a language. It has already been discussed in a previous chapter that a foreign language can also be best learnt and most effectively taught only when the process of learning the native language is

followed. Good reading ability is the result of good speaking ability. It does not require any scientific evidence to prove that a person who cannot speak well cannot read well, whereas it is certain that a person who can speak well can read well. From the point of view of teaching it has been experimentally proved that reading and speaking abilities go hand in hand and that the natural order is : speaking first, reading after that. Dr. West's contention that it is easy to read than to speak or write, and that the techniques of teaching reading are simpler than those of teaching speaking and writing might be accepted from the point of view of the teacher, but it is surely unacceptable from the point of view of the learner. Dr. West, however, did not set aside the question of acquiring an active command over English but he reserved it for the more gifted only. As the position of English was during the time of Dr. West it was difficult to convince any parent whether his son or daughter was, or was not, 'gifted'. Even today, when secondary education is becoming more and more expanded with a considerable increase in enrolment from various sections of rural and urban communities no parent would be easily convinced whether or not his son or daughter would benefit from English. If a good command over the language holds out prospects of a bright future each one would like his son or daughter to aspire and try for it.

The approach to the teaching of English in India through teaching students reading first and then speaking and writing is pedogogically unsound. The results of the performances of students also reveal that, though they can read and understand, they cannot speak and write correct language. If English be taught not only as a medium for reading but also for giving students the ability to use it in speech and writing, then the approach to it should be different. The situation, as it is today and in the near future, also demands that a learner of English should be able to use the language effectively. If a pupil cannot benefit from it, let him not learn it at all, but if he is to learn it, he must learn it well so that he can benefit from it.

3. **The Aural-Oral Approach (the Structural Approach as it is called).** The Aural-Oral Approach, as the term means, stands for teaching a language by giving opportunities to the students

to hear and speak the language. The material for that purpose is a set of carefully graded structures of that language which are basic in it, that is to say, which are adequate to enable the learner to use the language for expression of his reaction in a given situation *e.g.* stating facts, answering questions, responding, greeting, showing his emotional reaction, and so on. The structures are the basic moulds that make up the skeleton of a language and if the child can master them within the range of a limited vocabulary, the problem for him later on is only to increase his vocabulary so as to acquire greater proficiency in the language. The structural approach is thus 'an approach', not a method, of teaching a language and it implies emphasis on the teaching and learning of the basic items or material that constitute the framework of the language.

In a previous chapter, we have discussed why and how structural devices (which mean the form and arrangement of words and the use of function words) are more important than the vocabulary in teaching and learning a language from the point of view of economy and effectiveness. It has also been emphasised that the most effective way of teaching the structures is the aural-oral focus in the beginning which follows the order : hearing before speaking, speaking before reading, and reading before writing. The approach, which is very suitable at the initial stages (the first three years of English teaching) stands for the acceptance of the following general principles :—

(i)   Oral method to be employed for presenting all language material, which implies selection and gradation of suitable drills for training in speech-sounds, hearing, and reproducing them.

(ii)   No formal grammar or translation is to be taught. Mother-tongue may be used for giving some directions but not for teaching.

(iii)   No text-book is to be used at least until such time as pupils have acquired control of some speech units. It can be used after a few months.

(iv)   No reading or writing for at least three to four months. That is why 'no use of a text-book'.

(v)   The text-books used after that stage should have scientifically graded material in respect to structure and vocabulary.

(vi)   No lessons are set in advance to children that come to

the English class.   They only hear English and then repeat what they hear.

(vii)   Proper situations should be created in the class-room. Language cannot be taught or learnt in a vacuum.   It arises only in proper situations.

(viii)   Constant revision of the structures previously taught is necessary.

(ix)   Adequate drills—choral first and individual afterwards— to enable children to make structures 'matters of automatic habit', must be organised.

(x)   Fluency and accuracy from the very beginning—*i.e.* formation of correct speech habits—should be stressed.

The 'structural approach', the application of the principles underlying which will be discussed in the chapters that follow, has frequently been misunderstood rather than understood, abused, rather than used properly.   It would be worthwhile, therefore, to discuss, before mentioning the principles that it emphasises, some of the doubts that have emerged as a result of its wider recognition and why those doubts continue to persist.

Let it be stated, first of all, that the structural approach is not a new 'fad' in the teaching of English or any other language. It emphasises two points very strongly, and every teacher of a language will agree that those points do deserve special emphasis.   The point which comes up first is related to placing a greater emphasis on the 'structural' aspect of a language rather than the 'vocabulary' aspect.   The second point relates to a gradation of the structures so as to teach them through a chained, logical system.   There are certain other principles as well, that are involved in it so far as the application of the approach in the class-room is concerned.   But those principles are related to the various techniques of teaching and are similar to those advocated by the Direct Method.   We shall mention them a little later.   Let us, for the moment, be concerned with the two points mentioned above for it is on the basis of the special emphasis on these that the structural approach is consi- dered to be a unique approach to the teaching of a language, specially an analytical language like English. By laying emphasis on the material that is to be taught and the order in which it is to be taught, the structural approach emphasis not only "how

to teach" but also "what to teach". In fact, the central point in the approach is the "what", and not the "how", to teach. The question of a method of teaching can be very largely answered by the genius of a teacher but the question of the material to teach involves many kinds of specialised knowledges if it is to be answered satisfactorily—specially the knowledge of the structure of the language : how the language actually functions, what are its essential components, how words signal meanings, what meanings are of greater use and what not, what meanings will be useful for native learners and what to foreigners and so on. A language is a system and it can be learnt only when a systematic approach to it is made. So selection and gradation of material are very important. No method will work if the material has not been properly selected and organised.

We now turn to the points in respect to structures and their gradation in the case of English. The language as we use it today has the following special features which constitute its structure :

(i) Features of word-order and arrangement. To get the whole meaning of an utterance we have to know the meanings that are signalled by word-order as well. 'Bus Station' and 'Station Bus' have differences in meanings only due to arrangement of words ; so also in the sentences—'the boy loves the girl' and 'the girl loves the boy'—we have an example of difference in meanings due to word arrangements. This feature of the language has been discussed in chapter II. Suffice it to mention here that for getting the meaning of an utterance we must know the dictionary meanings of words as well as the meanings that are signalled by features of word-arrangement.

(ii) A second kind of meaning in English is signalled by inflections, derivational endings, prefixes, and infixes. Thus 'friend', 'friends', 'befriend', 'befriended', 'friendship', etc., all these have different meanings. These prefixes, suffixes, etc., do not have independent meanings ; rather, they signal meanings in the situation in which they are added to a word or words. These again are matters of the structural system of a language.

(iii) The use of function words again is a matter of structure. As has already been discussed in chapter II, the function words have, mostly, a relational meaning. They signal different

meanings in different contexts. Thus the word 'on' has one meaning in 'The book is on the table' but another in 'The seminar is on' or 'He went on'. The meanings of these function words can be taught only when they are functioning *i.e.* through use.

(iv) A fourth characteristic of the spoken form is the intonation with which an utterance is produced. Thus He is going to |De|lhi, and He is going to |Delhi, count two meanings if there is change in intonation. This will be true of all intonation languages and in speech people do make many differences in meanings of the same sentence by changing the intonation. This point in respect to the structure of English has also been discussed in a previous chapter.

Thus we see that in addition to dictionary meanings of words we have to know certain other meanings as well if we want to get the full meaning of an utterance. These meanings are signalled by the above devices *i.e.* the devices of word-arrangements, word-forms, use of function words and (in speech) intonation. These devices, as they operate, are the *structural* aspect of a language—that aspect of it that make up the skeleton or the moulds in which vocabulary can be fitted. They are in a way the slots into which items of vocabulary that can occupy that position can be readily fitted and substituted without any change of *structural meaning.* Thus in the sentence, 'This is a book', the frame or mould is 'This is a—' and in the slot marked by a blank can be written any word of class one (Noun) that can be substituted without any risk of changing the structural meaning. The moment a change is made in word order (*e.g.* writing— 'Is this a—?') or word form (*e.g.* This was a—') etc., the structural meanings will change.[1]

The structural meanings and the dictionary meanings of content words thus give us the full meaning of an utterance. The question now is : which of the two—structural meanings and dictionary meanings—deserve, greater emphasis so far as the teaching of English is concerned ? Or, to put it in other words : which of the two—structure and vocabulary—deserves greater emphasis ? There has been some controversy on the point as well, though it is now very widely recognised that if students

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[1] Please refer to Chapter no. 2 for further explanation of the point.

are to acquire a good command of language with economy of time and energy it would be better to teach them the basic structures of English with the help of a limited vocabulary. When we talk about the structural approach we do not mean that vocabulary is not to be taught and only structures are to be taught. How can one teach structures without the help of vocabulary ? The real point is that since language habits are habits of speech in respect to word-arrangements and their forms it would be more scientific to stress the teaching of all basic structures with the help of a limited vocabulary than to stress vocabulary and teach only a few structures. The following points in this connection deserve attention :—

1. A mastery of the basic structures of English (which are about 250-300) enables learners to acquire the ability to respond to normal situations in life. If they have made the structural devices "matters of automatic habit", they can use the language fluently in life-situations.

2. This mastery, therefore, acquired with due regard to accuracy of sounds and intonation, can give learners an active command of the language.

3. The vocabulary of a language is a very easy thing to teach. If students have mastered the structures (*i.e.*, if they know the way in which features of word-arrangements and word-forms signal meanings) they can learn the vocabulary they need ever without any assistance of a teacher.

4. The mastery of all vocabulary of a language is not possible as well. If a learner has mastered the structures he can choose the vocabulary he needs for his purposes.

5. Structures can be taught only by providing to students opportunities for use. Hence it is important to teach students the structures of English through constant use and practice.

6. In the beginning when emphasis is on structures, the vocabulary is to be controlled. Students' environment can supply items of vocabulary that can be used for teaching the basic structures.

7. The task is not difficult, and if a suitably graded structural syllabus is followed, the goal can be realised during the course of first three years of English-teaching. There are

many syllabi available—prepared in Madras State, also prepared by the Directorate of Extension Programmes for Secondary Education, the English Language Institute at Allahabad, and the Central Institute of English at Hyderabad—that can be used by teachers very successfully.

Looking at these points regarding the structural approach, we can say that the approach is nothing but a matter of using sentence patterns in the teaching of English rather than using words alone. That it is that is undoubtedly true ; the only distinguishing feature of the approach is that in a sentence it emphasises the structural aspect of it more than the aspect of vocabulary and that it attaches great importance to using judgment in the selection and gradation of structures. The following points have to be borne in mind while selecting and grading the structures to be taught :

1. Structures should be selected on the principle of "maximum range of applicability with the minimum of learning load". Out of alternative structures the one which is more productive has to be selected for teaching *e.g.* if there are two structures—'There is Mr. X' and 'Mr. X is there'—the latter has definitely more productivity and it can be more usefully and widely used than the former. Evidently, when there is a question of selection of structures, the latter will have a greater claim. This principle will be followed in selecting all structures.

2. Structures that are in greater frequency in use will have a better claim than those that are less frequent.

3. All structures, thus selected, will have to be suitably graded. Each 'item looks back to the one preceding, and it also looks forward to the one following—thus forming an interlocking system, each having some element or elements of the preceding structures and each also introducing some new elements of its own. 'One thing at a time'—this principle has to be strictly observed, and if a new structure is taught it should be taught with the help of known vocabulary and in the light of the structures already mastered. Similarly, if new items of vocabulary are to be introduced, that should be done with the help of known structures. For example, if the students have learnt,

'This is Ram', they can be taught 'This is a book/a pencil/a table'......and so on ; and after that 'This is a book', 'That is a

pencil', etc.   A close analysis of any graded syllabus will make this point clear.

After explaining the above features of the structural approach, let us turn back, for a while, to the point with which we started. This approach, though favoured very widely now, has still been exposed to some criticism and people have expressed severe doubts regarding its usefulness. As stated earlier, this approach has been more abused than used properly, more misunderstood than understood in its true spirit. We now turn to some of the doubts and criticisms that we have come across :

1.   It is presumed by many teachers of English that the structural approach is applicable only in the lower classes.

2.   It is believed to be true by many English teachers that the structural approach is a method of teaching certain well selected sentence patterns to children and that all that method implies is a kind of drilling in those sentence patterns in the class-room.

3.   It is also frequently argued that if the structural approach is followed it would not be possible to teach the text-books that are prescribed by various Departments of Education in different States.

4.   They also say that in senior classes where lessons in English prose, poetry, composition, etc., have to be conducted and students have to be prepared for public examinations the approach cannot be applicable.

5.   Some people also believe that since the traditional methods were good and people could learn English through them no new methods are necessary.   If the older generations could learn English through the traditional translation-grammar method the present generation also can.

6.   Teachers who think along these lines also maintain that for preparing students for the present type of High School and Intermediate Examinations the traditional method is the surest way.

7.   A few English teachers also argue that in view of the present situations—overcrowding in class-rooms, rigid curricula, system of external examinations, heavy load of work, etc.—the structural approach is not a practicable approach.   It can be suitably used with small classes and a flexible curriculum.

8.   There are some teachers who feel that the structural

approach is really a very sound approach but, if a teacher is to follow that approach, he must have a good proficiency in English. If he does not command that he cannot use the approach successfully. And since we do not have highly qualified teachers for our beginners of English, we have to accept the traditional approach per force.

A discussion of the utility and applicability of structural approach can proceed only when the above doubts have been removed or answered. Some of them are, however, due to the fact that many persons do not really understand the structural approach and they narrow it down to mechanical drilling of certain structures in class-room. Some of the doubts have surely a practical basis, for example, the one relating to the qualifications of the teacher who is to teach English or the material conditions under which a teacher is to teach. All methods and techniques are tools in the hands of a teacher, and if the knowledge of the teacher is not adequate he will not be able to work with the tools. On the contrary, he might misuse or abuse them. And that is what is happening to the structural approach with many persons who do not have adequate command of English. Similarly, if the teacher does not have necessary facilities under which he is to teach, if he has to handle a crowd, as heterogeneous in mental and emotional set-up as can be, his task would be very difficult, and inspite of the obvious virtues of a method he will not be able to use that as effectively as he could. Again, if the teacher has no freedom in his job, if he is to follow a rigid syllabus and if his efficiency as a teacher is to be determined by the number of 'passes' in the examinations he will not have a real incentive for work because his goal would be not 'teaching effectively' but enabling students to learn certain tricks by which they can get at least 33% marks in the examination. There isn't any contradiction in the two goals but when success in examination can be obtained by using less arduous techniques why bother about the arduous ones ?

But the doubts of those people who presume that the structural approach is applicable only in the case of beginners probably are due to a confusion in their minds between the terms 'approach' and 'method'. As mentioned earlier, the structural approach is, first and last, an *approach* to teaching a language

and not a *method* of teaching a language. An approach is a matter of principles—principles derived from a critical study of the nature of language and the psychology of teaching and learning—whereas a method is a body of techniques that a teacher adopts for teaching his subject in the class-room. There would, therefore, be a wide variety in the case of methods though there might be a general agreement on the point of approach. The use of the term 'structural method' would, therefore, be misleading and wherever in this book the term 'structural approach' is used, it involves some point regarding the basic theory in approaching the teaching of language rather than any point regarding the use of certain techniques. Any method is good if it serves a certain purpose. Even the Translation Method which has been of late so vehemently criticised is good provided that it leads to fulfilment of the objectives for which it is being used. There is no antithesis between an approach and a method because the two are so distinct and both have separate purposes to realize.

How does this discussion regarding the approach to a language and the method of teaching that help us in explaining the point that we started with ? If the question of approach is a matter of principles involved in teaching a language, then the structural approach would be adopted at all stages wherever there is a programme of teaching the structure of the language. The materials for different stages would be different but as long as we have some kind of programme of language teaching we would be following the structural approach whether we accept that or not. A college teacher who is teaching the use of appropriate prepositions or idiomatic expressions or is focussing the attention of students on some complicated sentence form is also following the structural approach because he is concerned with some aspects of the structural elements of the language. The method that he is using may be different from the one that is used for beginners but the approach is almost the same. To say, therefore, that the structural approach is applicable only in the case of beginners is a very erroneous statement. In the chapters that follow it is to be illustrated how the structural approach can be applied at different stages. The structural approach is an approach to the structure of language so as to give students a facility to use the

language for communication. If it means that, and that is the most scientific meaning that can be given to the term, then the approach would be applicable to all stages of language teaching programmes.

The confusion in the minds of teachers is not unfounded. Most of them see English teachers who profess to be following the structural approach drilling students mechanically in the class-room in certain selected sentence patterns and using the techniques of substitution for teaching items of vocabulary. So far as our experience goes most teachers use the techniques of oral teaching without knowing how to use them properly. It is for this reason that they arouse criticism and cannot convince those who doubt the usefulness of the structural approach.

There are those who maintain that the structural approach cannot be applicable in the case of teaching prose, poetry, drama, etc., and that if that approach is followed the courses prescribed for external examinations would not be covered. It may be suggested to them that the structural approach is an approach which is significant when we think of teaching *language* and not when we think of teaching *literature*. The latter is only a function of language ; it *is not* language. If in addition to teaching literature at a certain stage we have a programme of language teaching as well (which we have at all stages in the form of General English) or if while teaching literature we get stuck up with some item of language structure which is useful for students, then for dealing with the language aspect of our curriculum we shall follow the structural approach and for teaching literature, which means thoughts and ideas conveyed through language, their analysis and appreciation etc., we shall adopt a method to suit the objectives that we have for a particular stage.

The limitations of time do not and should not hamper our progress. In fact we over-teach our students and teach them too much without ascertaining whether students are learning. Much time is wasted in repeating the same thing over and over again, correcting the same errors almost every day in the class-room, explaining and summarising things which students could themselves understand if only they had better command of language. Courses are covered, syllabuses are finished and revised also—and students do that several times before examinations—yet their

command of language remains poor and they do not seem to have grasped what they might have been taught. There is a serious dichotomy between our teaching and testing. In the class-room we teach words and their meanings, explanations of difficult passages, contents of passages, etc., whereas in the examinations we lay emphasis on language. If a student's English is acceptable and even if he does not remember facts contained in a lesson we give him credit, whereas if his expression is bad and even though he remembers facts we do not give him even pass-marks. In other words, in the class-room emphasis is on the contents of a lesson; in the examinations, emphasis is on language. This divergence between what we teach and what we test is largely responsible for faulty methods and poor attainments of students. If we want to bridge this gap we must revise our techniques of teaching and establish a close relationship between teaching and testing.

An important objective of the secondary school to-day is to prepare students for the external examinations that are conducted by Departments of Education in various States. This should not, ideally speaking, be regarded as an important objective of the secondary school but situations as they exist in our country demand that the importance of this objective cannot be underestimated. We are all aware of the value of the certificates and degrees that are awarded on the basis of proficiency in the external examinations and as such nobody can contradict the view that preparing students for external examinations and enabling them to fare well in those examinations should be a very important objective in imparting education to students. Without going further with this discussion let us answer a question with regard to proficiency in English and the question is : Does the structural approach help a class-room teacher in preparing students for the present high or higher secondary school examination ? Those teachers who maintain that the traditional approach is the only approach that can help them in the job are mistaken in their views because year after year they see the performance of their students and they confess that it is deteriorating. Why should the new approach be not given a trial ? The experience of many teachers who have tried the approach in India and elsewhere confirms the view that if the

students are enabled to form the right type of speech habits in the beginning the task at a later stage becomes very easy. At present an English teacher in classes IX and X has to do a lot of correction work, explanation of words and meanings, analysis of structural difficulties simply because the background of students in language is very poor and adequate attention has not been given to prepare that in lower classes. If for the first three years a very concentrated programme of teaching English is administered properly, students in classes IX and X would be found to have in their possession an adequate facility with the language and the English teaching programme in the senior classes will be rendered very easy. But if adequate ground has not been prepared in the beginning the task at a later stage will be difficult. However, it is suggested that if properly devised structures are given due attention at a later stage as well and the English teacher devotes more time to teaching language and less to giving students certain tricks to pass the examination we will find that students are much better in their performance in the examinations that they otherwise can be. In fact, most of the students who pass in the examinations pass not because of our teaching but because of certain language facilities that they possessed before they came to us, and many students who fail in the examinations fail inspite of our teaching. This does not mean that our teaching does not have to do anything with students' success or failure in the examination but this does mean that our teaching is not the only factor that accounts for students' success or failure in the examinations. If we have to establish a relationship between our teaching and the performance of students in external examinations we must revise our techniques in the light of current situations which are not the same as they were a couple of decades ago.

The apprehensions of those who say that the structural approach is not suitable for large classes are not very real enough though they appear to be so. No method of teaching can be discussed without reference to conditions that are prevailing in our class-rooms. When we say that the structural approach may be given a trial we have the picture of large classes before us and we are also aware of the many limitations that our schools have. No method, however scientific it might

be, can yield the desired results if the conditions for work are not congenial. But we uphold that if any other method can work with large classes, the structural approach or the aural-oral approach to teaching English can also work, and it can work much more efficiently than any other method.

The goal of the structural approach is to lead the beginner to a satisfactory control of the basic patterns of English and to enable him to produce them orally with appropriate substitution of items as each occasion requires. When one has attained this stage of control, one can be said to have learned the language. To attain this goal, it is of utmost importance that teaching materials be so methodically graded and arranged that the learner can make progress, step by step, on the basis of what he has learned previously. Thus, the oral approach lays more stress on what to teach than how to teach. It is not merely devoted to practising unplanned, uncontrolled English conversation. This was the failing of the Direct Method.

Thus the two salient features of this new approach are : (1) A more clearly defined goal for the first stage of language learning, and (2) a much more complete understanding of what is essential in the material to be studied in order to attain the goal. Our aim, then, is complete and there is thorough mastery of the basic materials to the point that they can be produced orally by the pupils. The use of the term "first stage" here does not refer to young learners only. It has equal reference to the late adolescent or the adult, both of whom must go through a "first stage" when studying a new language. Probably the most important feature of the new approach is new understanding of precisely what it is that must be learned thoroughly during the first stage.

As stated earlier, this approach can be applied at all stages of language learning, regardless of the method being used. It also utilizes reading and writing as activities which reinforce the oral drill work to which a student is constantly exposed. Teachers must determine the appropriate time to introduce reading and writing as well as other procedures that help develop new language habits. Applications of this approach have failed in places where teachers believed oral practice only was involved. These teachers were so preoccupied with their

personal difficulties with spoken English that they neglected the reading part of the instruction. Many teachers who teach reading do not seem to know exactly what they are supposed to do about reading instruction in English. Incompetence in reading, whether in the mother-tongue or in the second language, is the chief cause of incompetence in the mastery of certain school subjects. Students cannot be taught to think efficiently if they cannot grasp meanings from what they read.

The advantages of a period of aural-oral work. Two most important advantages of the *hearing-speaking-only* phase of beginning classes are obvious to experienced teachers :—

1.   A basic phrase or sentence can be imitated and repeated orally far oftener than in writing. The entire class can imitate, repeat, and vary a basic model sentence many times under the teacher's immediate guidance.

2.   Oral classroom practice permits immediate correction of errors. In addition, it is important to keep in mind that the child's attitude toward the new language is being formed during this period. It is necessary that the learner becomes aware, during this period, that foreign language is for *communication*, that it is something to be used, rather than something to be studied about or used as a code for deciphering purposes.

The role of the classroom teacher during the pre-reading period. The function of the teacher during the beginning foreign language period is to help his pupils establish reliable, correct, and firmly-practised *habits* in the language, habits of hearing and responding, of listening and speaking. To develop these habits, the teacher must guide the pupils to a thorough control of a very limited portion of the foreign language as a secure foundation for their later more rapid progress with grammatical complexities and vocabulary expansion. The new language habits require very intensive well-planned practice on a rather limited body of vocabulary and sentence patterns. Complete fluency and total accuracy within the limits of the planned material are necessary.

During the early period of language learning the teacher has three roles to perform. He must *first* be the *model* for the students' imitation. For this role he needs an accurate control of the pronunciation and the sentence structures of the

materials his students are to learn. *Secondly*, the teacher must serve as a *judge* of the students' accuracy. In this role the teacher must draw upon his own secure control of the desired habits and his knowledge of the points of conflict between his native tongue and the foreign language. *Finally*, the teacher is a *manager*. The plan for the initial weeks of the course furnishes the teacher with the essential basic sentences to be introduced and practised and gives general directions for the development of the student's control and versatility. No two groups require the same amount of practice ; so it is the classroom teacher's task to continue the various activities until a point which represents a balance between insufficiency and effective performance.

The use of the mother-tongue during the pre-reading period. The question always arises concerning the extent to which the mother-tongue may be used in beginning foreign language classes. Many teachers feel that, with the exception of the first few meetings, only the foreign language should be spoken. Those in favour of this practice stress the points that the exclusive use of the foreign language from the very beginning provides the greatest possible motivation for the pupils, develops their powers of aural comprehension most rapidly, and establishes a real foreign language atmosphere in the classroom.

Others believe that during the initial stages of instruction the mother-tongue should be used *by the teacher* whenever he considers it necessary. While this group agrees that the foreign language should be used as much as possible, as the course progresses, that students sometimes may become frustrated if the rule of "foreign language only" is adopted, they further believe that the teacher's judicious use of the mother-tongue can assure a more efficient use of class time and thus allow for more active language practice by the students. Some teachers prefer to organize the classwork in such a way as to allow the first or last few minutes of each period for answering questions and giving explanations in the mother-tongue. There is general agreement that the use of words of the mother-tongue in a foreign language sentence and *vice versa* should be avoided. But the entire question of the extent to which the mother-tongue can or should

be used must be decided by the individual teacher on the basis of his own best judgment of the needs of his class.

THE AURAL-ORAL APPROACH VS. THE DIRECT METHOD

The Aural-Oral Approach and the Direct Method are very much similar as the above-mentioned principles of both show. In fact the method to present the structures is also direct under the aural-oral approach. In neither method are formal grammar and translation encouraged. But the advocates of the Direct Method do not stress the necessity of confining strictly to hearing and speaking in the beginning. They attempt to teach reading and writing too, if not from the very first-day, after a very short time. They do advocate use of a text-book and do not have the material selected and graded scientifically. The Aural-Oral Approach emphasises both and defines their true relationship in effecting quick progress. The limitations of the Direct Method are supplemented by the aural-oral approach.

But people should not be over enthusiastic to overlook the limitations of the aural-oral approach. No single method or approach can solve all problems of teaching a language which is a very complicated system. Several items of vocabulary and structure cannot be taught by following the structural approach, but, as has been said previously, it is very effective in the beginning when we have to confine ourselves to the basic items of the language, though in actual practice with unimaginative and less skilled teachers this approach too is bound to degenerate into mechanical drilling in structures.

THE SITUATIONAL APPROACH

The situational approach is a matter of principle in teaching a language. As mentioned earlier, language does not grow in a vacuum ; the teacher should create appropriate situations to stimulate the pupils to use the language. The appropriateness of the situation establishes the necessary bond between the language symbol or symbols and the object or idea or thought symbolised and thus creates an atmosphere in which language can grow. Various devices can be used for that purpose to

which we shall refer in the chapter that follows. Creation of appropriate situations is very essential for adopting the aural-oral approach successfully.

Conclusion. Certain conclusions with regard to a scientific approach to language teaching deserve attention as we close this chapter. They are as follows :—

(i) Teachers should not rigidly follow one method, but evolve their own methods taking into consideration the objectives they have set for themselves, the facilities that are available, and the kind of material they are to work on.

(ii) The problem of teaching a language boils down in the ultimate analysis to giving children certain skills in the use of a language. The teachers would well benefit from their experiences in the teaching and learning of mother-tongue because all skills are acquired through a similar process.

(iii) The basic items of the language are its structures which, if taught within the range of a limited vocabulary, give a pupil an active command to use the language.

(iv) The natural order in learning a language is : hearing before speaking, speaking before reading, and reading before writing. Hence the aural-oral focus in the beginning is very effective.

(v) Language-material can be successfully taught by creating proper situations in the class-room.

(vi) Translation and grammar are no devices for teaching a language. They have their place and utility, but not as a device for teaching.

(vii) All material for teaching should be properly selected and graded. Language has a bewildering mass of words, phrases, structures, and the way they function. It is important that the material for each stage is scientifically selected and then graded.

(viii) The use of mother-tongue should be made very scientifically and not arbitrarily.

Teaching English to Pupils at different stages—Beginners, Juniors and Seniors— Co-ordination of Methods and Material

For the successful execution of any programme of education at different stages it is important that proper planning is done in advance on the basis of the needs of students, demands of the society, and a correct appraisal of the situations at school. A functional activity needs careful planning, then effective executing by pooling together all the resources available, and lastly, an adequate appraisal of the outcomes. Planning, executing, and appraising are the cyclic aspects of a functional activity and they must be given the attention they deserve for making any programme successful.

In the teaching of English too, the importance of proper planning, directing, co-ordinating, and evaluating should not be lost sight of. Much of the wastage will be checked, and much of overlapping avoided if the material for different stages is properly planned and organised for teaching. Our long-range purpose is to enable the pupil to acquire an ability to use English effectively by the time he leaves the secondary stage, which means class XII in some States and class XI in others. The general pattern of education today does not favour the teaching of English at the elementary school level though there are some private schools—mission schools, public schools, convents, etc.— that do have a programme of English right from the very beginning. But the number of such schools is very small, and they are in addition to the general framework of the national system of education. Instead, therefore, of having three stages of English upto the Secondary School level we have now only two, viz. the junior high and the senior high school levels because English is no longer a subject of instruction in the elementary school.

We have thus the two stages—the junior high (grades VI, VII and VIII) and the senior high (grades IX to XI or XII)—at which English has to be taught. In a previous chapter it has been discussed that the position of English in school curriculum is not what it was during the pre-independence era. Not only it has ceased to be a medium of instruction at the Secondary School level, but there has been a curtailment in the time also that was formerly devoted to the teaching of English. Yet we expect the same level of proficiency in English from our students that those of the preceding generation acquired. This argument should not, however, be advanced as a plea to account for the deteriorating standards in English at the Secondary level, and as mentioned earlier, much can be done to raise the level of students' proficiency in English by better organisation and co-ordination of work at school through the different grades and by adopting better and more scientific techniques of instruction. For all this, it is essential that we define our objectives clearly and in concrete terms at the junior high and senior high school levels, and then see how we can organise the material and what methods we shall adopt to realise those objectives. A properly devised programme keeping in view the desired objectives executed with co-operative efforts which means proper co-ordination of work through different grades, and pursued with scientific techniques, should go a long way to yield better results, and check the downward trend of standards of proficiency in English.

OBJECTIVES AT THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

For making an analysis of the objectives of teaching English at the Junior High School level which might be useful from a practical point of view, let us briefly analyse what we expect a student after three years of English (*i.e.* after studying through grades VI, VII and VIII) should be able to do. Such an analysis will enable us not only to measure his proficiency in English but will also guide us in selecting the material and adopting the right types of techniques of instruction that will assist us in helping the students move towards the goals and acquire the expected proficiency. A glance at the syllabi of different states for the Junior High School level and a

consideration of the expectations of the school, parents, and pupils show that a student at the end of the third year should be able to :—

1. make simple statements through English. He should be able to frame short, simple sentences to express himself through speech and writing,

2. be able to speak with a pronunciation that is acceptable, *i.e.* he should acquire a command over the phonemes of the language, and speak English with proper stress and intonation,

3. write English legibly and coherently using proper punctuation and capitals where necessary, and correct spelling,

4. be able to respond to short conversational questions and be able to ask questions himself,

5. acquire reading ability and be able to read the material that is appropriate for his level,

6. acquire a vocabulary which, though limited, is enough to help him in the use of the language that he makes,

7. be able to understand English, when spoken (This means that his standard of speech should approximate the native speakers' so that if a native speaker speaks English which is not above his level he should be able to understand),

8. be able to use English when he has to respond to calls, requests, greetings, etc., or when he has to do the same to others,

9. have his aim fixed at the conversational English—English as it is used in speech, *objective English* as it is called—and not English which is strictly text-book English, *subjective English* as it is called. The traditions of written English are in several respects different from the traditions of spoken English though this difference is not meaningful to make one confused between spoken English and text-book English. Our purpose in the beginning is to help the child acquire a command over spoken forms, colloquial or conversational English, rather than the text-book English.

WHAT DO WE NOT EXPECT HIM TO DO ?

We do not expect a pupil at the end of the third year of English to do translation or to repeat rules of grammar or to attempt free composition on abstract themes. Translation is a

separate skill, a purely intellectual exercise which the pupil should be able to do only when he can use two languages freely. Grammar, as has been mentioned previously, is no aid to teaching. It is rather an incumbrance in the beginning, an additional sub-ject-load which pupils cannot carry because they do not know the language. What is important is grammatical usage, and not rules, that children should learn. Free composition is beyond their level. Their vocabulary is limited and so also their hold over different usages of a complex nature. Hence any attempt to give them freedom in composition might degenerate into licence as their limited vocabulary and language forms would not be adequate to enable them to express all their thoughts and ideas. Though the skill to develop ability for free composition should start at this stage, a year or even two more years of language study would be essential for acquiring the skill to write free composition.

MATERIAL TO BE USED FOR REALISING THE ABOVE OBJECTIVES

(i) **Structures.** During the first three years the teachers' efforts will be directed towards teaching students the basic structures of the English language. Several lists of graded structures are available. It should not be assumed that only one gradation would be final and no improvements could be made. The teacher can use his own imagination to make alterations in the order in which the structures are to be taken up. There cannot be any rule that a certain gradation should be followed.

Several states in India have prepared and adopted structural syllabi. Madras was the first State to do that as early as 1952. In U. P. efforts are being made to modify the syllabus, but only partial success has been made in the direction. The syllabus that has been prepared by the English-Language Institute at Allahabad is quite good and may be used by the teachers. However, if certain changes have to be made in the order of structures and the class-room teacher thinks he can do that successfully, he may do that. The syllabus is, after all, a tool, and not the master, of the teacher.

(ii) **Vocabulary.** The question of vocabulary selection is very important at the initial stages. It is ordinarily believed

that a vocabulary of roughly two thousand and five hundred words is adequate to enable a person to speak the English language and use it for all purposes. The advocates of the Basic English had only a vocabulary of 850 words to enable one to give a command to use the language. The Basic English vocabulary is, however, not favoured now and the concept has also invited a lot of criticism. The problem now is that, if a vocabulary of about 2,500 words should be adequate to give a student a good command to use the language freely, how much of it should be taught at the initial stages, *i.e.*, during the first three years ? Also what will be the criteria for selecting vocabulary for the Junior High School stage ? The answer to the first question is that since students are beginning to learn English and the emphasis is on their learning the structures of English, the vocabulary in the beginning shall be limited. It may range between 800 to 1000 words during the first three years, and this number will include not only content words but also function words, and also those words that are useful in certain localities from the geographical or historical point of view. During the Senior High School stage students will have greater capacity and opportunities to increase their vocabulary because by that time they will have mastered the basic structures of the language and they will not have to devote so much time to learning the structures as to increasing their proficiency in the use of the language by increasing their vocabulary and using complex sentence forms.

The next question—What shall be the criterion for selecting vocabulary for the Junior High School stage ?—demands a scientific analysis. Various vocabulary lists have been made and each one of them is as good as the other. The choice of words, in all cases, should be governed by the following principles :—

(a) As we look at the structure of the English language we find that the function words play a very dominant part in operating the structures. They should, therefore, be introduced as early as possible. Since the function words, of which the articles and prepositions are very important, can be taught only in proper sentence-patterns and phrase-patterns, so an attempt to teach vocabulary should not be confined to teaching words in isolation (which will not also be possible in the case of function

words) but in proper speech units, whether sentence-patterns or phrase-patterns.

(b)   Of the function words, only those are to be taught first that are very common.   An analysis of the frequency of function words might reveal that in almost 80% constructions 8 or 9 prepositions suffice to work them and only 5 or 6 conjunctions are the most essential.   Of the prepositions, 'at', 'in', 'from', 'of', 'on', 'to', 'by', 'with', 'into', 'over' are the most frequently used ones, and of the conjunctions, 'and' and 'but'.   A teacher can use his own imagination and commonsense in case he has no scientific basis to decide which of the prepositions, conjunctions, and determiners he will teach first and which afterwards.   He has also to use his judgment in deciding which meaning of a function word he would teach first and which afterwards.   For example, will he teach the meaning of the word 'on' in the construction—'the book is on the table'—or in the construction— 'the English class is on' or 'the radio programme is on' ?

(c)   A point which is very important in the case of the use of prepositions is that it is easier to teach them while they are determining relationships, or, to use the traditional way of explaining their function, when they are 'prepositions' governing some noun or pronoun in the objective case, than it is to teach them when they are giving direction to some verb (and are used adverbially, *e.g.* He came in) or when they are joined to a verb to give it idiomatic meaning, *e.g.* 'He is breaking in the horse.' It is important that teachers first teach the first use, and then the second. The third use may be reserved for the Senior High School stage.

(d)   The criterion for selecting content words is not as difficult as it is for selecting the function words. The class-room, the school, the play-ground, students' homes, their social environment, will provide the necessary field from which objects and things will be selected.   A pupil should know the following :

   (i)   Parts of his body—hand, fingers, nose, feet, ears, eyes, etc.
   (ii)   Clothes that he wears.
   (iii)   Things that he uses in the class-room, at school, and at home.
   (iv)   Other articles of common use, and relationships *e.g.* father, sister, brother, etc.

(v) Actions and movements that he makes by himself or with others, *e.g.* sit, jump, stand, laugh, sing, talk, write, read, shout, walk, run, throw, catch, etc.

(vi) Activities he does to grow physically—health, exercise, etc.

(vii) Activities he does for amusement or recreation, *e.g.* picnic, going to cinema, listening to radio, etc.

(viii) Prominent objects in his natural and social environment and aspects of social behaviour—market, bazar, city, village, trees, flowers, birds, animals (their names), river, machine, factory, aeroplanes, ships, etc., and greetings, calls, requests, etc.

(ix) Qualifiers-adjectives and adverbs that are frequently used for name-words and action-words.

(x) Substitute words–Pronouns–personal, used for nouns.

(iii) **Grammar.** Since the purpose during the first three years of English-teaching is to give students a command over the basic structures of the language, which, in other words, means the accepted usage of English, no attempt should be made to teach formal grammar. Students will learn the usage, rather than the rules about the usage. Whatever grammar they learn will be in the form of function of words and the way they are used rather than the rules that govern their function. They will learn, for example, through use and practice, to say 'This is a book' or 'these are books' or 'I am a boy' and 'she is a girl', etc. ; they do not have to learn that 'this' refers to 'one object' and so the verb will not be in the plural form, or 'these' refers to many objects and so the verb will not be in the singular form, and so on. They will learn 'this' or 'these' or 'is' or 'are' not as singular and plural forms but as they function in utterances. Though they are that way learning English grammar, but they are doing that quite unconsciously as they do that in the process of learning their mother-tongue. If some body asked a question : 'Does a child of five years know the grammar of his language ?'—the answer would be that he does know the grammar in the sense that he has learnt to respond to the signals of structural meanings. Nobody can speak a language without knowing its grammar in that sense, and for speaking a language only that much grammar is adequate. If one can respond to the devices that

signal structural meanings and can also produce proper signals to convey his structural meaning, he is supposed to know the grammar of the language, not by form of words but by their functions. At the Junior High School stage much labour would be saved and much wastage checked if teachers stuck to the aims enumerated above, followed a scientifically organised structural syllabus and avoided teaching of formal grammar completely. However, if the practical aspects of the syllabi and requirements of public examinations demand that formal grammar should be taught, then it should be taught in the last year of the Junior High School stage, and it should be based on the language material that pupils have learnt. It is important that the teaching of grammar is correlated with the students' experiences in the language, and a course in English grammar should not go beyond a discussion of the following :—

(a) Sentence—definition—patterns—S.V.—S.V.O.—Interrogative sentences, negative sentences.
(b) Parts of a sentence—subject and predicate.
(c) Elements in a subject and in the predicate.
(d) Parts of speech-their functions and not merely definitions.
(e) Numbers.
(f) Genders.

Two precautions have to be taken in the teaching of grammar : (1) A teacher should not attempt to teach everything regarding every item of grammar. Only those aspects should be taken which are within the language-experience of pupils. (2) Secondly, the teacher should be careful in helping pupils draw correct generalisations and he should not stick to traditional definitions some of which are vague, ambiguous, and even unscientific.

We have referred to the inductive method of teaching grammar in a previous chapter. Teachers from the very beginning will not attempt to thrust rules of grammar upon pupils. Let boys and girls discover them and thus draw inferences themselves. We shall refer to this method in a separate chapter at a later stage.

The approach to grammatical material in the beginning should be in the order in which the pupil has learnt the language. Since he starts with a complete utterance the teacher will do well by starting with the sentence and then making its division and

defining its kind (but only those that pupils have learnt). The above-mentioned material in grammar for the last year of the Junior High School is suggested to be taken up in the order in which it is mentioned.

The question of fixing order of material is very important and it should be scientifically determined for different elements as well in the same topic. For example, while teaching parts of speech what shall be start with ? With Nouns ? Or with Verbs ? Obviously, the question of priority comes up. In this case we shall start with 'verbs' because 'the verb' is the central word in a sentence. There can be a sentence with 'a verb' only. No other part of speech can make a complete sentence by itself.

(iv) **Composition** : Composition will play a very important part of the programme at the Junior High School stage. The term 'composition' should not be construed in a narrow meaning as is sometimes done, when some people say that composition and essay-writing or letter-writing are synonymous. Broadly speaking, composition is the act of putting into speech or writing an idea, however limited, in original language. If a person asks somebody what his name is, and the latter tells him his name in one short sentence, there is some composition. To compose is just to put one's thought or thoughts together with a definite end in view. In the beginning the students will not be able to put several thoughts together in a coherent and inter-related manner. It will be only by acquiring the ability through gradual processes that they will be able to do that.

For enabling students to acquire good compositional ability, systematic efforts should be made from the very beginning. The implications of this statement are obvious : Firstly, it should be realised that to develop good compositional ability the students should be helped from the very beginning to speak and write (when writing is introduced) systematically, and secondly, teachers should help them to proceed from 'no compositional ability' in English in the beginning to 'free compositional ability' at the end of the secondary school. To achieve these objectives it is necessary to select and grade the material at different levels. If bad habits, *e.g.* confused thinking, wrong uses of vocabulary, bad speech habits, doing slip-shod and slovenly work, etc., are picked up in

the beginning, and not assiduously checked, they will tend to persist and get confirmed so that at a later stage they will be found difficult to be got rid of. During the first three years, therefore, teachers of English must be very careful in selecting and organising the material so that students gradually learn not only correct forms of expression but also their inter-relationships when they are brought to bear on an idea. As a corollary to this, it should be remembered that all composition work during the first three years must be strictly controlled. A vast majority of students produce bad composition due to the interference of mother-tongue. It is important, therefore, that pupils at the Junior High School level are not normally taken out of their desks and that they are not asked to express their ideas on any subject for which they do not possess the necessary vocabulary. Teachers complain of students' unsatisfactory compositional ability but they forget that composition lessons are not scientifically approached and that most people believe that a knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary should be adequate to enable a student to write correct English. The hard fact is that a person can acquire the ability to compose properly only by practising to compose properly, and that it can be done only through gradual steps. Learning of English grammar and an adequate stock of vocabulary do not fit together to enable a person to speak or write good English. If they could, the whole conception regarding the nature and function of language would have been otherwise.

Suggestions for teaching composition during the first three years are the following :—

(a) All composition work during the initial stages should be perfectly controlled and the teacher should take enough care to direct the efforts of students into specific channels.

(b) This involves selection of suitable material and its gradation suitable for different stages.

(c) Helping pupils when they start writing short compositions arrange their ideas and express them coherently.

(d) Taking care to see that students do not have to say or write anything for which they do not have necessary vocabulary.

A PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE
FIRST THREE YEARS

First Year.

(a)   No written work for the first few months.

(b)   After that when writing has been introduced the teacher may start with completion exercises, *e.g.*

   (i)   (holding an object in hand and showing it to students).

      This is a.........

      This is an.........

   (ii)   There are three pencils on the table, a......pencil, a......pencil, a......pencil, (having pencils of three colours on the table).

   (iii)   (Involving use of prepositions).

      The book is not......the table ; it is......the chair, or it is......the box.

      (use of on, in)

   (iv)   (use of pronouns)

      Gopal is a boy......goes to school every day.

      Sita is a girl......does not go to bazar.

   (v)   (use of apostrophe and 's')

      Hari's......'s name is Ramesh Kumar.

      Sita's......'s name is Gopal.

Many other types of fill-in-the-blanks exercises can be used, and they are not only useful to provide a good start, but they are also very interesting to pupils. Interrogative forms are also to be used, *e.g.*

      He is a boy.

      ......he a boy ?

The number-idea is also to be developed, *e.g.*

There are three......on the table. (pencils, books)

For the first year these types of exercises would be enough and the teacher should not be very much ambitious at this stage.

Second Year.

During the second year the idea of simple continuous composition should be developed and the teacher might start with questions asking students to write the answers. The questions

may be written on the blackboard but there should be proper situations in the class-room, for students to give the proper response.

I step.   Questions on blackboard, *e.g.*
1.   Where is the book ?
2.   Where is the pencil ?
3.   Is that a yellow book ?
4.   Is that a green pencil ?
     (and so on)

II step. Questions on the same object to describe that, *e.g.*
1.   Where is the book ?
2.   What colour is that book ?
3.   Whose book is that ?
4.   What does he do with the book ?
     (and so on)

III step.   From 'book' to other objects, then saying something about oneself, *e.g.*

I am a boy. My name is......... I have two hands.

(and so on)

Third Year.

In the third year students should be able to take short dictation from their books and be able to write short sentences independently. They should also be able to answer questions from their books. Towards the end of the year they should be able to write short compositions on subjects like (My school, My home, My town, My village, etc.)

SUBSTITUTION TABLES

During the first three years substitution tables play a very important role in the programme of teaching English. They may not be very useful during the first year but later on, during the second and third years, they have a very useful place in the material selected for teaching. They provide students plenty of opportunities for drillwork, are very interesting, and develop speech-habits of students by giving them greater proficiency in fluent speech. The teacher can prepare his own tables on the pattern given on the next page :—

TABLE 1
For Beginners

This		my	book
			copy-book
	is		pencil
			pen
		your	chair
That			table

The set gives twenty-four sentences to be practised in rapid succession :—

1st set.
1. This is my book.
2. This is my copy-book.
3. This is my pencil.
4. This is my pen.
5. This is my chair.
6. This is my table.

2nd set of six sentences (by substituting 'your' for 'my').

3rd set of six sentences (by substituting 'that' for 'this').

4th set of six sentences (by substituting 'your' for 'my' with 'that is......' form).

TABLE 2

What	did	you	give		man	yesterday ?
		he	say	to that	boy	
		I				
			teach		woman	
		she				

N.B. All substitution tables should also be graded. Table No. 2 is for very advanced pupils and should not be taken up. The second table is to be taken up after the first. Again the patterns that are drilled with the help of substitution tables should be the patterns that have been taught. Substitution tables are good devices for pattern practice and they fulfil a very significant purpose (which is of enabling pupils to acquire fluency of speech and developing automatic habits) at the Junior High School stage.

Method at the Junior High School stage. As has been pointed out above, the material for the Junior High School level should be in the form of graded structures of the English language presented to pupils within the range of a limited vocabulary. After a few months of oral drills in the class the teacher may introduce reading and writing, but the text-books used should also have material presented within the range of students' vocabulary and the sentence-patterns that they have learned. Material in the text-books should also be graded. Selection is necessary because a child who is learning a second language should be made to learn only the necessary elements of language. There is no sense in learning those elements that are not in frequent use. Grading is essential to give the material a psychological basis. There is, undoubtedly, a dearth of good text-books that can satisfy this criterion but some attempts have been made in the direction of preparing suitable text-books and in this regard the efforts of Dr. Jean Forrester, Professor Gatenby, English language Institute at C.P.I. Allahabad, and a few others may deserve mention.

It has also been discussed earlier in a previous chapter that the structural approach can work well if it is adopted along with the situational approach which means that the teacher while presenting a structure should create the necessary situations in the classroom. Language does not grow in a vacuum and proper situations only stimulate the use of language. If a teacher is teaching the form, 'this is a book' he will do well only when he has a book in his hand to which he points out and expects the boys to say that after him. Similarly, if he has to teach, 'the book is on the table', he should have a book on the table before he can say 'the book is on the table'. The first step in teaching through the structural approach, or more precisely, the aural-oral approach, is to create the proper situation in the classroom. Only then can the teacher establish a direct relationship between an object, thought, or idea and the language symbols representing them. Sufficient hearing by students is essential if they can be expected to speak properly. Ear-training forms a very essential aspect of teaching at the initial stages. Another point which is to be taken note of is that students should repeat in chorus before each one of them is asked to speak individually.

The advantages of choral drills in the beginning are obvious : students get greater opportunities to hear, they can catch the intonation with greater facility, they shake off their shy habits if they have any, and thus get greater confidence, and lastly, the juniors take pleasure in collective drills. Individual practice is also equally important, and at a later stage is more important than collective drills which in the third year may not be as useful as in the first year ; but individual drills should follow, and not precede, choral or collective drills.

Our method, therefore, for teaching students the structures in the beginning will be as follows :—

1.   Creating proper situations in the classroom.

2.   Presentation of the sentence by the teacher and repetition of it several times so that pupils can well hear it and the sounds and intonation of the utterance resound in their ears.

3.   Collective drill—all students repeating after the teacher.

4.   Individual drills and teacher correcting students' errors in speech.

Use of chained dialogues. The use of chained dialogue provides to students a very good opportunity for pattern-practising. It is a very useful and interesting device which the teacher should adopt from the very beginning. After individual drills the teacher can ask each one of the students to hold the object (a book for example in hand) and say to the student sitting beside him 'this is a book', the next boy then saying the same to the one sitting beside him, and so on. Later on when the question form has been introduced, the device of chained conversation is found to be very interesting, and it creates tremendous activity in the classroom. For example when the teacher has introduced the form 'what is this ?' he can ask each student to say to the other 'this is a book. What is this ?' As the interrogative forms get multiplying the device becomes all the more useful. Students get the satisfaction of talking to the teacher as well as to their class-fellows, and this gives them immense incentive to acquire greater and greater facility in the use of the language.

For teaching vocabulary the simple direct approach should be adopted. The teacher should associate words with objects or pictures of objects or models thereof. For teaching action-words he should demonstrate through his own actions, gestures, or

movements what he is doing.   It may be remembered that while teaching action words the '......ing' form should be taken first because that is the one that the teacher can demonstrate easily. He can perform an action, say, of standing or sitting or opening the door, etc. and say what he is doing while he is doing that. The three forms that can be easily taught by creating appropriate situations in the classroom are the present continuous, then the immediate future, and then the present perfect.   Though not to be introduced until a few months have passed, these patterns are the easiest ones that should be introduced first before others are taken up.   The teacher can easily introduce 'I am writing on the blackboard' (and he should keep writing thereon as he is saying that), and after the form has been mastered by pupils he can clean the blackboard, and then say, 'I am going to write on the blackboard' (immediate future) ; then he starts writing and says 'I am writing on the blackboard'; and finally, he faces the students after finishing writing and says, 'I have written on the blackboard'.   The approach is a bit tiring and may tax the re-sourcefulness of the teacher to a very great extent ; nevertheless, it is based on a very fundamental principle of language teaching to which reference has been made above.   Language grows only in proper situations and a child learns it by catching it rather than by its being injected into his mind.   Language is caught rather than taught.

Use of minimal pairs. The teacher's task in the beginning is very difficult and he has to teach students the sounds of a language that students do not know.   Some of the sounds might sound like those in their mother-tongue while others may be very different.   Students are likely to get confused and their habits in the use of the mother-tongue might intervene to lead them into picking up wrong habits in the foreign language. Hindi speaking children usually pronounce the labio-dental voiceless fricative /f/ as 'फ' which in Hindi is an aspirated bila-bial stop ; they mistake the voiced labio-dental fricative /v/ for 'भ'.   Several other instances can be quoted to prove that students are very likely to pronounce various vowel and consonant sounds in English like their nearest equivalents in Hindi.   It is for checking these kinds of tendencies that the use of minimal pairs is to be found very useful.   A minimal pair is a pair of words

with difference of a single sound in the same position, *e.g.* pen, then ; ran, man ; pin, bin ; cut, shut ; met, mat ; raise, race ; pot, hot ; bought, caught ; etc.   Spellings do not influence a minimal pair ; it is the sounds that do.   A teacher can use minimal pairs to enable students to recognise the differences and to produce them.   A very good training in correct production of sounds is necessary and the teacher should help children as they stutter or stammer with them.

Composition.   We have discussed earlier in this chapter that for a few months no written work would be done and teachers and students will concentrate only on oral work.   After a few months writing may be introduced, but in doing that the teacher should find it useful to introduce the full patterns to teach writing rather than attempt to teach students the English alphabet and spelling in the traditional way.   If the students have got an oral command of a few items of language through their ears, they can also get a command in writing as well through their eyes.   The traditional approach was adopted when students did not have any command over any language-material. For them the letters, the spellings, the meanings of individual words, and the structural meanings conveyed by the devices of wordforms and arrangements were all unfamiliar.   The new approach gives them the command over the latter two aspects which are more important than the former two, and consequently, envisages a synthetic, in place of an analytic, approach which would involve waste of time and might delay the process of acquiring writing skills.   The teacher should, therefore, start with simple patterns written on the blackboard in simple, and not cursive, writing and ask students to practise writing.   Towards the end of the year when students have learnt the alphabet and spellings of the words they know, they can be given completion exercises of different kinds.   Beyond that nothing more should be expected in the first year.   In the second year, chained sentences can be introduced, and in the third, short descriptive topics like 'my home', 'my school', etc. can be very good items for compositional work.

The spelling of the English language is very confusing and special care in the beginning should be taken to save students from getting confused.   It is suggested, therefore, that the items

of vocabulary should be selected very scientifically. Words with
regular spellings (*e.g.* pen, hen, bench, etc.) should be taken first
before words with irregular spellings are taken.

Grammar. As has been discussed above, no formal grammar
is to be taught during the first two years, and in the third year
when it is taken up, it should be taught inductively rather than
deductively. The material for grammar lessons will be the
language material that pupils have learnt and the teacher will
teach grammar only by helping pupils to observe, analyse,
classify, and categorise the forms they have learnt, and study
them to discover their systems to form some rational bases
according to which they operate. The approach, as has been
suggested, will start from the sentence and then go to its parts
and students will see the relationships (*e.g.* subject and predicate
relationships) to be illustrated thus :

Subject	*Predicate*
I	go.
I	go quickly.
The man	goes quickly.
The old man	goes very quickly.
The good old man	goes very quickly.

A point which deserves attention is that as our approach to
teaching language is through complete patterns and to teaching
writing also through complete patterns, so our approach in
teaching grammar should also start with the whole pattern and
then break it down to the single word. The traditional approach
started with single words (parts of speech) and then worked upto
the syntax as the same approach in teaching speech started with
single words and in teaching writing through the components
of words (*i.e.* the alphabet and the spelling). That approach is
no longer regarded as very scientific and the more rational
approach is through the whole pattern first. Through this
approach students can learn the devices of making out syntac-
tical layers and finding out relationships between words much
more easily than they can through the traditional approach. A
part of speech is a part of a speech and it has a function for
which it is put in a certain class. If by doing syntactical analysis
students can grasp the functions and find out which word or
word groups go together they not only learn correct grammar

but also develop a rational and scientific attitude towards the system of language.   A few examples of syntactical analysis will help the teachers how to do that, and how to devise more examples.

N. B. (*Examples should be selected from the language material that students have at their command.*)

1. I	go	to	the	market
			determiner	noun
		preposition		noun (object)
		preposition		noun phrase
Subject		Predicate		

2. The	red	book	is	on	the	green	table
						adjective	noun
	adj.	noun			article	noun and its qualifier	
				prep.	noun (object)		
article	noun and its qualifier						
			verb	prep.	noun phrase		
Subject					Predicate		

Such tables can enable pupils to see the position of words and their relationships and functions which are the real material for grammar and which is more important than mechanical and unintelligent memorisation of rules and paradigms.

THE SENIOR STAGE

GRADES IX TO XI OR XII

Aims and objectives.   As we started with a discussion of the objectives of teaching English at the Junior High School stage (*i.e.* the first three years of English teaching and learning) so also it is essential that we define for our purpose very clearly as to what we shall expect a student to know when he leaves the Higher Secondary stage so that we might see clearly as to what the teacher should give and how he should do that.

The pattern of secondary education in India is of two kinds although it is hoped that sooner or later there will be a uniform pattern so far as the Secondary Stage is concerned, which means that it will be three years after the Junior High School Stage. At present in some States they have four years after the Junior High School Stage (grades IX to XII with two public examinations at the end of X and XII grades), while in others it is only three years and only one public examination is held, which comes at the end of the third year. Whatever the pattern, it should not bother us in the matter we are discussing. If a student has four years of secondary education, he will only be at an advantage of one year's proficiency in English which is more a matter of vocabulary than one of English usage. In other words, a student who has only three years of English after the Junior High School should not be regarded as having learned less English than the one who has received four years of English. The latter might add to his vocabulary more words and phrases but he does not learn more about English usage. If English is taught scientifically, a learner should master the basic items of structure during the first three years and then at the secondary level he should have greater opportunities to learn complicated patterns, which can be done during the first two years, the emphasis for the most part being on helping him acquire greater proficiency by acquiring greater command over English vocabulary, phrases and idioms, and also to develop a taste for English literature.

Aims and objectives.   With this introduction let us now turn to an analysis of the aims and objectives of teaching English at the secondary level :

1.   A student at the end of the secondary stage should be able to speak English fluently and accurately.   Fluency implies acquisition of a reasonable standard in speech-habits, which means speaking with an acceptable pronunciation and intonation. Accuracy means use of the accepted usages.

2.   He should be able to speak freely, which means that he should think in English and speak the language with ease and facility.

3.   The test of his speaking ability would not be a situation when he is required to make speeches, but the day-to-day situations in which he is called on to talk to somebody or to express his ideas on a certain point in classroom, at school, at home, and in society.   He should be able to respond and react to situations actively and not remain only a passive listener.

4.   He should acquire the ability to understand the native speakers also and be able to respond to them.

5.   He should be able to compose freely and independently in speech and writing.   Development of free and independent compositional ability should be one of the very important aims at the Secondary Stage.

6.   He should be able to read books with understanding— books which are suitable for his standard.

7.   He should be able to read newspapers, journals, and periodicals, etc. of his standard and be able to comprehend their import.

8.   He should acquire a vocabulary of 2500 words approximately and that should include frequent and choiced English phrases and idioms.   He should be able to make active use of it. This vocabulary should be sufficient for him to enable him to read, write, and speak, and do all that intelligently, and with ease and facility.

9.   He should acquire a thorough knowledge of English grammar and develop a critical and rational outlook regarding the system of the language.

10.   He should be able to compare the structure of English with that of his mother-tongue and be able to translate ideas from English into his mother-tongue and vice versa.

11.   He should acquire a taste for collateral reading and be able to do that independently.

12. He should be able to use resource material, *e.g.* dictionaries, reference books, etc. when he stands in need thereof.

13. He should get initiated into English literature as well. The adolescent age by the very nature of its psychology needs some material which has a humanising influence upon the adolescent and which can kindle his imagination and develop his sympathies. Literature fulfils that need and some material from choicest authors, poets, dramatists, and novelists—material which is suitable for that age-group and is not above their mental level—should be provided in the third and fourth years of the secondary level, if not earlier.

14. Lastly, a student who has passed the secondary level should be expected to use English as an intelligent citizen. By the time he crosses that stage he has had 6 or 7 years of English, and if the programme has been properly organised a student should have the ability to use English as an active and self-dependent citizen.

A few comments on the aims and objectives that have been enumerated above are necessary before we attempt to discuss a practical and practicable approach to the teaching of English at the Secondary School level.

(i) The objectives enlisted above seem to be very ambitious and when we see the actual products of our secondary institutions we are likely to feel obliged to accept that these objectives are good for the platform ; they cannot be good for classroom, and that even if we strive to the utmost and do all that our resources can permit us to do, the objectives mentioned above would remain utopian and their realisation would be an empty dream. Such a conclusion is, no doubt, based on an actual appraisal of the situations existing in our country at the moment—situations arising out of a plethora of administrative and financial problems the magnitude of which makes it rather difficult to execute successfully not only a sound programme of teaching English but the whole programme of education at different levels. The objectives mentioned above appear to be very ambitious not because they are impracticable in all situations but because they are so in the context of the situations that we have in our country at the moment. If we can have good teachers in our schools—teachers who are proficient in the

subject and who have the necessary attitude to teach—if we have a well-organised programme, good text-books, better student-teacher ratio—facilities that we shall discuss at a later stage in this volume—we can surely have better standards and can to a very appreciable degree approximate, if not completely realise, the objectives.

(ii) In a previous chapter we have discussed that a pupil with normal intelligence can learn any language. Since language-learning is a question of acquiring certain habits and skills, no superior intelligence is needed for that purpose. It is not acquiring an ability to grasp complex abstractions or conceptions ; it is just a question of formation of language-habits which can be possible for a learner through constant use of the language. A person who can learn one language can learn another language as well provided that the methods that gave him proficiency in one language are the methods used for teaching another language. We have formed this hypothesis to state that every child in India who can speak his mother-tongue fluently can also be taught English and that he can also be taught with the above-mentioned objectives in view. It has, however, to be admitted that not all children can benefit from English and that some special aptitude is necessary for acquiring proficiency in language. There is something like linguistic aptitude and those who do not have that may not struggle for learning English, but those who have that should make all efforts to learn it and acquire sufficient proficiency in it.

(iii) Since Hindi is our national language now, some people might assert that too much attention to the teaching of English might lead to inadequate attention to Hindi and that might affect the cause of Hindi adversely. To those who have a belief of this kind, we say that there does not exist any conflict between the learning of Hindi and the learning of English. In fact, if the theory of transfer is accepted, a person who is proficient in one language can acquire greater proficiency in another language than a person who has no proficiency in any language. The results of the public examinations and the opinions of a vast majority of teachers show that along with a decline in the standards of English there has also been a decline in the standards of Hindi even in those states where Hindi is

the mother-tongue. This does not go to say that the decline in the standards of English has led to a decline in the standards of Hindi. What we want to stress is that the decline in the standards of English has not in any way resulted in increase in the standards of Hindi. Hence the objectives that we have mentioned above envisage a very high standard of English at the secondary stage but that should not mean that if those objectives are kept in view for teaching English there would be any decline in the standards of Hindi or that students will devote less attention to Hindi in case they have to devote more attention to English. Those who know Hindi or any regional language (which is their native language) well can also learn English well, and those who know English well will learn their own language better.

The importance of having clear objectives will be discussed in a separate chapter at a later stage when we discuss the concept of evaluation in the teaching of English. Suffice it to mention here that the above objectives, in the light of the brief comments made above, should be perfectly attainable and that, if the programme of teaching English is scientifically organised and executed by competent persons, they should not look very ambitious.   How can that be done ?

MATERIAL AND METHODS : CO-ORDINATION OF WORK

(i) The first thing that we should like to emphasise is that the total programme of teaching English from the first year of the Junior High school to the last year of the Senior High school should be properly planned, executed, co-ordinated, and evaluated at every stage. Language specialists have come to recognise five stages in the development of any set of language habits. They are recognition, imitation, repetition, selection, and variation. No stage is a separate entity by itself, but is a part of an on-going process. It is very essential, therefore, to plan, execute and co-ordinate work at different stages of school level to keep the process going and also to avoid overlapping and wastage.

This means that all teachers of English in consultation with the Principal should define clearly the objectives for each stage, organise the entire material through which these objectives are

to be realised and demarcate for themselves how much they have to do in common and how much each has to do individually. It is a common experience that teachers of English do not realise the significance of this kind of co-operation and co-ordination of work. A teacher of the Senior High school shifts all blame to the teacher of the Junior High school for not having done his job properly, and, later on, when the students join universities and they do not seem to be faring well in English, the university teacher throws all blame upon the secondary school teacher for not having prepared the background. For the successful execution of any programme co-operation of all concerned and co-ordination of work are very essential.

The concept of co-ordination of work is significant from the stand-point of the material for teaching as well. If we look at the syllabi of different states in English we can easily notice a deplorable lack of sequence and continuity in the programme from the Junior High school to the University stage. The programme of English-teaching or teaching of any other subject should proceed step by step, and at no stage should there be a clear division between the material at one stage and that at the other that follows. At present, a student who crosses the Junior High school stage finds that in class IX he has to study certain aspects of the language to which he was not introduced at all at the Junior High school stage. The material in text-books that are used at the secondary stage is not scientifically organised, the methods of presentation are also different and the emphasis shifts to a large extent from language to content of books, grammar, and translation, etc. Similar is the case when the pupil passes the High School examination at the end of the second year of secondary school (where there is a system of two public examinations) and joins the intermediate course. At the latter stage he has to study material which pertains more to literature than language, and his energies are frittered away in unintelligent cramming of explanations, figures of speech, styles of writers and poets, synopses of short stories and essays. The programme of language teaching which starts in grade VI and which should go on receiving much attention throughout the secondary stage does no longer receive that attention, and even

if it does, it is sketchy and haphazardly organised. It is no wonder that a vast majority of students write very faulty English even after they have studied the language for 6 or 7 years. We have mentioned among the objectives that at the secondary stage students should be introduced to selected aspects of literature as well, but that should not mean a neglect of the programme in language which should consist of sufficient practice in the use of the forms that have been learnt, a greater command over the English idioms and phrases, more proficiency in using involved constructions, greater power to use English vocabulary effectively, and so on. All this demands that there should be proper co-ordination of work at different levels and that different bodies that prepare syllabuses for different stages, and teachers that teach pupils through different grades should move in closer co-operation and collaboration. No plan of work can be executed with success unless that is done. At present there is a woeful lack of such co-operation and co-ordination in our country, and much of the wastage, not only in the teaching of English but in the execution of the total educational programme, can be attributed to that.

(ii) After considering the necessity and importance of co-ordination of work at the Junior High and Secondary levels we turn to the problem of selecting material for the secondary stage. A very erroneous conception persists in the minds of a vast majority of teachers when they say or think that the term 'material' for secondary stage means the 'text-books'. Text-books are a part of the whole material ; they are not the entire material. If teachers give the text-books only that much importance that they deserve many problems of language teaching would be solved. By text-books people usually mean the prose and poetry text-books and also those which are prescribed for non-detailed study. These are, no doubt, very important, and a wise teacher would use them very profitably, but they are not the only material that he would use to teach English, which means the different language forms, English idioms and phrases, vocabulary, and English structure—material which he can pick and select from various sources and organise that for purposes of teaching. Let us now briefly discuss the type of material that an English teacher would use at the

secondary stage and then go to determine the way as to how he might do that. And we start with the text-books :

(a) **Text books and supplementary reading material.** It is a common complaint against the text-books that are in use at different stages that they are not good, that the material in them is not well-selected, that in some cases it is not suitable for secondary level, specially in poetry, that no attempt is made to adopt and grade the material scientifically, and so on. Since the text-books are, almost in all cases, prescribed by the State Departments of Education teachers do not have any choice but to select 'the best out of the worst' and teach. Well, selecting the best out of the worst is a golden rule and if teachers can do that properly they would do a nice job. After all we cannot have ideal conditions—conditions which are good on the ideational level only. We live in the human world with all its frailties and foibles and we should not expect what is humanly impracticable. Let us take the situations as they are and see what can be done :

(i) We can select the best out of the many that have been prescribed.

(ii) We can grade the content of the books if it has not been graded.

(iii) We can emphasise those forms, expressions, aspects of vocabulary and idiom, etc. that are more frequent and more useful. We can surely lay less emphasis, if not ignore altogether, the forms and words, phrases, etc. that are not in frequent use.

(iv) We can distribute our time over various aspects of language-teaching in such a way that each receives the attention it deserves. (At present most of the teachers devote 6 periods to text and 3 periods to language per week.) We would reverse the distribution, give more attention to language and less to content of books. If students can express their ideas in correct language, if they can understand English, the question of mastering the contents is very much facilitated and a student can learn the contents of the book in less than half the time that is spent these days for that purpose.

For selecting text-books (from those prescribed) the following main criteria may be kept in mind :—

(i)   Are the contents of the book suitable from the point of view of students' interests, experience, and abilities ? (Too much abstract material might not be good.)

(ii) Is the language of the various lessons in the text-book properly adapted to the level of the secondary school boys and girls ? (A high-flown style and vocabulary will only multiply problems of instruction.)

(iii) Are the lessons in the book properly graded ? ('Easy to difficult' is a very sound psychological maxim of any methodical procedure, and it facilitates the task of the teacher by making learning easy.)

(iv) Are there suitable exercises at the end of each lesson so as to provide plenty of opportunities to the students to do oral and written work based on the lesson ? (Exercises should be on different aspects of language—comprehension, spelling, composition, grammar, etc.)

(v)   Are these exercises in the text-books such as can provide the basis for proper evaluation of students' attainments ?

(vi) Are lessons properly illustrated ?

(vii) Can the material of the book permit use of suitable audio-visual aids ?

(viii) Can the material stimulate students to do more reading from the library ?

(ix) Is the print of the book neat and bold ? And is its get-up attractive ?

(x)   Is the price of the book reasonable ?

The supplementary reading material should also be very carefully selected. In most states of India at the Higher Secondary stage there are two kinds of readers that students have to read, *viz.* (i) those that are prescribed for detailed study, *i.e.* for studying the vocabulary, meanings of words and phrases, spellings, sentence-forms, and content ; and (ii) those that are prescribed for non-detailed study, books which are called supplementary readers or rapid reading books. The purpose of the latter is to provide students plenty of opportunities to read and to acquire a taste for reading. The rapid-reading books are very useful for enabling students to read independently and acquire sufficient practice in reading. In the examinations also they are required only to answer a few comprehension questions

on the material in those books ; they are not required to answer questions on vocabulary or explanation, etc. As a rule these supplementary readers should be easier in respect of structure and vocabulary than the text-books so that students might read them without much difficulty and need very little or no guidance from the teacher. Unfortunately in our country it would not be unlikely to find in many cases the supplementary or 'rapid' readers more difficult than those that are prescribed for detailed study. Such a policy is educationally unsound and it baulks the progress of students. Sufficient care should be exercised in selecting readers for supplementary reading. The following main criteria may well be kept in mind :—

1. Readers have plenty of material which can arouse interest of students and in reading which they may take delight.

2. Readers should have all kinds of material—stories, descriptive essays, dialogues, biographical materials, dramas adapted in story form for students, etc.—so that students may have different types of material to read.

3. All material should conform to the psychological needs of the adolescents and nothing should be there which is above their heads.

4. Language of the readers should be easy so that students might read the books with very little guidance from the teacher.

5. These readers should have a set of pointed questions and exercises at the end of each lesson which the student might do for themselves.

6. Readers must satisfy the necessary requirements as regards their printing, illustrations, prices, etc.

Great care should be taken in selecting readers for supplementary reading. In a text lesson a student learns many things that pertain to the language—*e.g.* spelling, vocabulary, sentence-forms, etc. He learns also how to read properly, how to answer questions on thought-content, how to explain or amplify certain thoughts, ideas, etc. In a rapid reading lesson he does not learn these things ; rather, he practises them all and thus confirms, and acquires greater proficiency in, the use of the language. The purposes are, therefore, different and a teacher of language should have a clear perspective of them before

selecting any kind of books—whether for detailed study or for non-detailed study.

(b) **Grammar.** During the three or four years of the secondary school the students should be made to acquire a command over the grammar of the English language. They are supposed to have been introduced to a preliminary course in English grammar in the third year of the Junior High School where they must learn the simple sentence forms, parts of simple sentences and functions of the various parts of speech. During the secondary school stage they should gradually be introduced to the complex and compound sentences, then to the various kinds of the parts of speech and their respective functions, and then lastly, they should be given training and practice in analysis, synthesis, and transformation of sentences. Punctuation will come in when the pupils go from simple to complex or compound sentences. As the students will observe the functions of different words and their forms in different positions they will learn gradually all about morphology and syntax. Two points are to be specially mentioned in connection with the material in English grammar, *viz.*

(i) All material should be systematically organised and the students should be enabled to see the system. Nothing should be presented in fragments. For example, if the teacher is teaching verbs, he should make it clear to the students how the verbs function in different situations—as transitives or intransitives, as auxiliaries, as indicating present or past or future time, as functioning as half nouns and half verbs (gerunds), or half-adjectives and half-verbs (present participle), and so on. All English grammar is a study of the syntax-forms and formations of sentences—and morphology—forms and formations of words. Instead of proceeding from morphology the teacher should proceed from the syntax—from the whole to the parts—and follow a systematic and psychological procedure to let students see the whole and then analyse it into parts. The teaching of English grammar can be useful only then when it is taken up in close conjunction with the language and when the students are asked to observe and analyse what they know, and do that systematically. (ii) Secondly, when the students have seen the system and have learned to categorise sentence forms and words,

only then they should be asked to draw generalisations and deduce some rules that might help them in explaining the features of the language. For executing any programme on the teaching of English grammar a period of two years, working twice a week, should be enough, and that would be enough not only for teaching but also for practising which is very important.

A point which is very important while teaching grammar is that the material upon which students and teachers work should be based on the material that they are using in other lessons of which the reading lessons are the most important. The teacher may have examples from various other sources as well, but the emphasis on the material in the text-books should not be under-estimated and students should be given plenty of opportunities to look at the language forms in their books and use them for classifications and categorisations in grammar. That would bring about a happy correlation between text and grammar and would bring in effective co-ordination of work among different phases of language-teaching.

(c) **Composition.** Compositional work at the secondary stage will be of several kinds. It should not be limited within the bounds of essay-writing or letter-writing. Students should have plenty of opportunities for speaking and writing in the classroom. All work that relates to any kind of discussion—questions and answers, explanations, amplification, precis-writing, theme-writing, even translation to a certain degree—comes under composition. Teachers should not, therefore, think that compositional ability be related to essay-writing and letter-writing only. Wherever and whenever students have a chance to put their thoughts together under some stimulus or some situation there and then is some kind of composition. The ability to compare is the most essential ability that students should be enabled to develop and sufficient opportunities should be provided at the higher secondary stage for the students to develop this ability.

All compositional work also should be properly selected and graded. Students can express their ideas only on those subjects which exist within their physical or mental experience. This point is very important to remember because quite frequently in some public examinations would be found certain topics which

do not have any reference to students' experiences. 'An aeroplane flight' or 'a visit to a hill station' or 'a motor-car accident' are some of the topics which a student at the higher secondary stage is expected to write a composition on, but how many students are there who had ever had any physical or mental experience of these, and if even some had, how many teachers would be there who would have given the requisite vocabulary for writing an essay on any one of these topics ? The point is that when we want our students to discuss certain things, ideas, or objects we must be sure that they have those things, ideas, or objects within their experience and also that they have the necessary vocabulary to express their ideas on them. Without experience one does not know what to write and without language one does not know how to do that.

The simple criteria for selecting and grading exercises in composition are the same as the general maxims for a methodical process, *viz*. simple to complex themes, easy to difficult ones, concrete to abstract, and known to unknown. Begin with simple questions, simple topics at school, at home, and within students' environment, simple exercises from the texts, etc. and then go to the difficult ones gradually. A student at the end of the higher secondary stage should be able to write composition freely and independently, and if the work is properly organised it should not be difficult for the teacher to help pupils acquire that ability. We shall discuss the topic in some greater details when we talk about composition in a separate chapter.

Translation is a separate kind of exercise which requires a separate kind of practice. It is related to composition in the sense that in doing translation also the ability to express ideas in another language is called into action. Since translation is among the requirements of public examinations at the secondary stage provision should be made for systematic work in that field too. Exercises in translation should be graded in respect of structure and students should be supplied the necessary vocabulary too, if they do not have that enough for the purpose. As a rule, care should be taken not to ask students to translate sentences in which they have certain words for which they do not have corresponding equivalents in the foreign language.

(d) **Items of English structure.** We have emphasised above

that the process of language learning is an ongoing process which starts in the first year of the junior high school in most states of our country and that should continue through the end of the secondary stage. The basic items of language, *i.e.* the simple sentence forms, statements and interrogatives—are mastered by the pupils during the first three years. They also get initiated into a limited vocabulary by which they can operate those structures. At the secondary level the more complex and compound forms should be introduced and the vocabulary should increase in respect of not only words but also English idioms and phrases. The following items of structure should receive continued attention at the secondary stage :

(i) Structure of complex and compound sentences.

(ii) Sentences in active and passive voice.

(iii) Sentences signalling meanings through direct and indirect forms of speech.

(iv) English idioms (noun phrases, adjective phrases, verb phrases, adverbial phrases, etc.). The common ones should be selected and taught through illustrating their use.

(v) Compact expressions, *e.g.* a single word denoting long idea (*e.g.* posthumous, regicide, suicide, monarchy, democracy, etc.)

(vi) Spelling exercises : for improvement in spelling pupils may be introduced to the commonly used homonyms, *e.g.* birth, berth ; fair, fare ; mail, male ; etc.

(vii) Punctuation : sufficient practice in the use of all punctuation marks.

(viii) Paragraphing : how to organise material and divide it into suitable paragraphs.

(ix) In poetry : figures of speech—simile, metaphor, personification, alliteration, assonance, and metre.

Some of these items will be taken up along with the teaching of grammar and some along with the teaching of composition. Separate provision may also be made in the school time-table to explain to students the fundamental principles regarding the mechanics of writing and acquiring an ability to write accurately and coherently. For getting a good command over structure adequate practice is necessary and the process of teaching is no other than 'practice, correction and practice'.

METHODS AT THE SECONDARY STAGE

No specific method can be dictated for handling lessons in prose and poetry and teachers will use their own genius and commonsense to teach students. However, certain essential features of the method used may be suggested :

In handling lessons in text teachers should not over-emphasise contents of the lesson so as to belittle the importance of focussing attention on items of English structure involved in a particular lesson. It may be mentioned in this connection that for teaching each lesson successfully the teacher will do well by spending a little time in advance in analysing the teaching points in that lesson. In a prose lesson normally the teacher would have some items of structure, some of vocabulary and some of style to teach in addition to the contents of the lesson. None of these should escape attention of the teacher and he should also fix up the priority of taking up the items in class-room. The logical order would be ; first, handling items of structure and vocabulary, and then items of content, and lastly, items of style. If the difficulties in respect of structure and vocabulary are removed, students would be able to read the lesson with intelligence and ease, and they will be able to comprehend the thought-contents.

HOW IS THAT TO BE DONE ?

1. **Structure.** The teacher may make a note of the new or unfamiliar forms of expression and might focus attention of students on them. He should also give them a chance to use that structure if that is significant. The process for introducing new forms of expression would be the same as for easier and known ones.

2. **Vocabulary.** The problem of introducing new vocabulary needs some detailed discussion. At the Junior High School level the problem is not difficult because most of the words that students learn are concrete words in the sense that they can be illustrated either through direct association of symbols and things or objects symbolised or through pictures, models or diagrams. Action words can be introduced through gestures and demonstra-tions. In other words, the problem of introducing vocabulary

of content words at the Junior High School level is solved easily because of the fact that most items of vocabulary can be explained through the help of audio-visual material. Function words can be introduced through their use. The problem at the Higher Secondary stage is a bit difficult because of the nature of the vocabulary that has to be introduced—abstract words, technical words, idiomatic expressions of different kinds, phrases of different kinds, and so on. If the translation-method is used the problem is solved on one hand in some cases but multiplied in others because translation is not a good device ; students may not learn the correct meaning, and even if they do, they will not learn the use of the vocabulary, which is more significant than the meaning of the word or group of words. The following general principles and a few techniques are suggested for introducing vocabulary (which includes idioms and phrases as well) and enabling students to acquire an active command over it :

1. Items of vocabulary should be carefully marked. In any sentence or sequence of sentence would be found certain words that can be treated in isolation, whereas there would be certain words which can be handled only in groups of meaningful units. All phrases and idiomatic expressions fall in the second category. No attempt should be made by the teacher to teach the individual words in a phrase or in an idiom in isolation. Students will not only learn incorrect meaning, but they will also be unable to pick up the use of that phrase or idiom. Besides, if they learn the meanings of individual words they will have a tendency to read also word by word and try to make out the meaning of a speech unit by trying to make out the meanings of individual words, which is impossible. English is a highly idiomatic language, and at the secondary stage students should learn not only the meanings of idioms but also their use.

2. A serious danger in giving meanings of individual words is that students will not only not learn the full connotation of a word but they might also learn wrong connotations. If a teacher says that 'a gang' in 'a gang of robbers' means 'समूह' the pupil might also translate 'नावों का समूह' as a 'gang of boats' or 'सौदागरों का समूह' as 'a gang of merchants', and so on. Words that go in pairs and those that have appropriate usage only when they go in pairs should not be taught in isolation.

3. While teaching verbs special care should be taken to take the whole verb which means the main verb, the auxiliary verb if there is any, and the appropriate preposition that follows the verb. Never should a teacher attempt to teach a verb and its use without taking it along with the preposition if there is any to follow it. In many cases prepositions (when used adverbially and also as prepositions) change the meaning of the verb *e.g.* 'to look to', 'to look at', 'to set up', 'to set out', 'to deal in', 'to deal with', and so on. No attempt should be made to find out the meaning of the verb and the preposition or the adverbial separately.

4. Condensed expressions or figurative usages should be explained by substituting for them simple expressions.

DEVICES THROUGH WHICH WORDS AND PHRASES CAN BE EXPLAINED

1. **Use in context.** This is a very commonly used device and is one that is very useful. If the meaning of a word or phrase is illustrated through using it in proper situations the meaning becomes clear and at the same time students learn the use of the word or phrase. Adjectives and adjectival phrases, adverbs and adverbial phrases and all function words can be very well explained by using the device. It is not necessary that the teacher attempts to illustrate the meaning by using the word or phrase in one sentence only. What is important is that he creates a situation, and that might be done through several sentences, so that the meaning of the word becomes clear. Situations may be similar, *e.g.* 'He comes to school every day. He does his work. He is a good boy'. Or they may be contrasting, *e.g.* 'He does not come to school. He does not do his work. He is a bad boy.'

2. **Material demonstration.** Showing actual objects or models thereof or pictures is a very good device to illustrate the meanings of nouns and quality words which can be sensed through senses. All these words that symbolise some sensory experience can be explained by establishing through visual aids a contact between the symbols and the things or objects they symbolise. Imaginative teachers can also draw blackboard sketches to illustrate meanings.

3. **Morphological devices.** The formations of words in English are governed by a large number of suffixes and prefixes, and if students have been introduced to them they can easily grasp the meanings of the stems if they know the root. If, for example, they know the word 'friend' they can be easily taught the meanings of 'friendship' and 'befriend'. This experience in one case can help them to understand other words *e.g.* 'king', 'kingship' ; 'sports', 'sportsman', 'sportsmanship', and so on. All suffixes and prefixes carry relational meanings with them and if students know these meanings they can transfer them to several words in which they find them and thus grasp their meanings and use.

4. A very important illustrative material is the teacher himself who through his gestures and movements can illustrate the use of a large number of words, specially the action words.

5. Use of mother-tongue as the last alternative and when it is economical.

Meanings can thus be, broadly speaking, explained through material association or creating a situation in the classroom or through some kind of activity. In all these cases the teacher should take care that he does not substitute a more difficult word for the one in hand or a more difficult expression for a less difficult one. The purpose, after all, is not to teach symbols but the idea behind the symbols or the idea or ideas they carry. There is no sense, as Champion says, in hammering into the minds of students that 'to dig' means 'to excavate'. 'To dig' is an easier word and if the pupils understand the action symbolised by the word they need not be given the equivalent word 'to excavate' because it is more difficult. They may learn it later on but not for understanding the meaning of the word 'to dig'.

Organisation of lessons in English Text. A lesson in English prose at the secondary stage has to be taught with several objectives in view. They are on the list that we prepared before we started talking about material and methods at the secondary stage. To put them more specifically, the purpose in teaching a lesson in prose would normally be to—

(i) enable students to read with comprehension and to read properly with proper intonation,

(ii) help them build up an effective vocabulary,

(iii)   guide them to acquire greater control over the forms of structure, and

(iv)   enable them to speak and write correct English within an acceptable standard of fluency.

Some of these aims would find place in other lessons as well but in an English prose lesson they should receive considerable attention. If we analyse the aims in terms of experiences we find that we should—

Aim   (i)   1.   give students opportunities to read loudly as well as silently for intonation and comprehension,

2.   help them as they read by correcting their pronunciations and intonation,

3.   test whether they have understood the contents.

4.   introduce new vocabulary,

Aim   (ii)   5.   focus their attention on spelling and use,

6.   give them a chance to acquire an effective control over it,

7.   introduce to them the complex structures,

Aim   (iii)   8.   help them to break them and study their internal elements,

9.   give them a chance to use the ones that are common,

10.   ask questions to create situations so that they speak,

Aim   (iv)   11.   give them exercises for home-written assignments and suggest collateral readings,

12.   advise them properly if their expression is faulty.

TEACHER-STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Teacher	Student
1. Reads the lesson.	1. Reads the lesson—loudly and silently.
2. Introduces the structures and items of vocabulary.	2. Understands the new structures and vocabulary and uses them.
3. Asks questions.	3. Answers questions.
4. Corrects errors in speech and uses them.	4. Takes assignments and does them sincerely.

5. Gives assignments and sug-   5. Co-operates with the teacher
    gests readings.   and takes his advice seri-
                                        ously.

6. Helps students individually
    and collectively.

No order is suggested as to the order of steps in teaching. The above-mentioned activities are important and they should find place in every lesson. Each day's lesson should be assigned to students in advance so that they can come prepared with their difficulties and are also better mentally prepared to receive instruction in the lesson. Several procedures are adopted by teachers for presenting a lesson in prose but each procedure is as good as the other provided that it accommodates the activities of the teacher and student mentioned above and is definitely concerned with the objectives in mind.

ORGANISATION OF LESSONS IN ENGLISH POETRY

We have mentioned in our list of aims of teaching English at the secondary stage that along with a well-organised programme of teaching English language there would also be good reason to teach pupils some selected aspects of English literature as well. In the material that we choose for that purpose poetry will also occupy an important place. Care should, however, be taken to select poetical pieces for different grades. Simple descriptive and narrative poems may give a good start in grades IX and X and then in the XI and XII grades verses of some good poets may be selected. As in the case of lessons in prose in the text-books prescribed for high school students, so in the case of poems there are to be found in the selections prescribed some poems which students fail to understand and appreciate. The purpose of teaching poetry in the first two grades is to enable students to grasp the contents of the poems and also help them appreciate the beauty of language by appreciating the rhyme and rhythm and simple figurative expressions like simile, metaphor, personi-fication, alliteration, etc. which they can easily appreciate in the light of their background in their own mother-tongue. No attempt should be made in a poetry lesson to emphasise the structural aspects of language, but every attempt should be made to enable students to grasp the contents of the poem and

appreciate the feelings, emotions, mood, ideas, reflections, etc. of the poet. In fact poetry cannot be taught, it can only be caught. Teaching would kill it.

What then are the activities in which teachers and students would get themselves involved in a normal poetry lesson ? Obviously, reading will be an important activity—reading for rhythm and rhyme, both by the teacher and the students. Explanations of unfamiliar words and analysis of the condensed expressions and inverted sentence-order will be necessary to the extent to which they go to clarify the meaning, and lastly, there would be discussion through questions and answers on the contents of the poem and also on the appreciative aspect, which means a discussion of the rhythm and rhyme, the metre, the figures of speech, word-melody, word-selection, and so on. Beauty of form and language should not be lost sight of because, as Coleridge remarked, in prose words are in their best order, but in poetry, best words are in their best order.

The aims in teaching English poetry to pupils in secondary schools are : (i) to enable them to read poetry for pleasure and profit, (ii) to help them to understand the thoughts, ideas and feelings of the poet and to extend their sympathetic appreciation to them, (iii) to stimulate students' imagination and to appeal to their emotions, (iv) to help them appreciate the beauty of form and style. A teacher of English poetry will not emphasise the structural aspect of language by analysing the structures in- volved, or devising drills in the use of structures or words used in the poem. These are good exercises for a language lesson, but not for a lesson in English poetry.

ORGANISATION OF LESSONS FOR NON-DETAILED STUDY

It has been discussed previously in this chapter that at the secondary level students should be provided with sufficient in- centive and opportunities for doing extensive reading. The purpose of these is to enable them to acquire and develop reading habits and also be able to read independently. What kind of material—*i.e.* the readers—will be useful for that purpose, is a question that has also been discussed. The aims of intro- ducing supplementary readers at this stage are : (i) to enable students to read extensively and build up good reading habits,

(ii) to provide to them sufficient material in which they may feel interested so that they can read independently and utilize their hours of leisure properly, and (iii) to enable them to make use of the language material that they have at their command through passive as well as active use of it. Ability to read independently or write under some guidance from the teacher and to comprehend what they read is to be the aim that the students should have in mind. Lessons in supplementary readers should not be meant for detailed study. All that is necessary is that students should be required to read and answer questions asked to find out whether they have followed what they have read. In the classroom the teacher will not lay much emphasis on structure and vocabulary, except when he finds that some items of structure or vocabulary are likely to effect the general comprehension of the lesson by the students. People read newspapers, journals, magazines, etc. and they come across many expressions or words that are unfamiliar to them, but very few are there that impede the general comprehension of the material read. So is the case with students reading supplementary readers. If they come across certain words or expressions that are unfamiliar to them they need not bother themselves about their meaning so long as they can grasp the main contents of the lesson. If, however, there are certain points in respect of language that have to be explained the teacher should help.

Emphasis in a lesson in supplementary reading books will be on reading by students, loud reading occasionally, but mostly silent reading. The teacher will explain the essential difficulties in respect of language if that is necessary, but he will ask questions to find out whether students have understood what they have read. Good questioning is a very effective means to stimulate concentrated reading. Sometimes questions may be set in the very beginning or written on the blackboard and students asked to read and find out their answers. On other occasions questions might be asked when students have finished reading. In every case it is essential that questions are well-organised— that they are pointed and short, that they touch the main points of the lesson, that they are suitable for students of that level, that they can be answered by an average reader, that they are thought-provoking and systematically organised. In any

lesson in any subject the technique of organising questions has a tremendous instructional value and questions should not be regarded as a means only to find out what students know, but they should be regarded as potential instruments of instruction and also a very effective tool to find out what students do not know and what kind of help they need.

ORGANISATION OF COMPOSITIONAL EXERCISES

Compositional work will form an essential aspect of every lesson in English, because in all lessons students will have questions which they will be called upon to answer. This point has been discussed previously and it need not be repeated here. Our purpose in organising compositional work is to provide students with as many opportunities as possible for self-expression through speech and writing. Since good writing habits are based on good speech-habits so all composition work will be oral at first, and students will be asked to write what has been orally discussed at first. Oral work must precede written work if students' wayward and chaotic expressions are to be checked. Oral work will be organised by the teacher in such a way that students not only grasp the contents of the theme they are to write on, but they also grasp the system—the order—through which the different ideas are to be presented, whether it is in the case of explanations or precis-writing or theme-writing or letter-writing. Good composition is a matter of not only the contents of a thought-process but also the process itself through which thoughts flow—the sequence in which they are organised.

Along with this sequence, students should also be enabled to write neatly and clearly. No carelessly written or slip-shod work should ever be accepted. To encourage students to do composition-work the principle of uniformity should be avoided and the teacher may improvise different kinds of exercises, simple and difficult, for students of different abilities and interests.

ORGANISATION OF INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH GRAMMAR

The aims of teaching English grammar at this level are : (i) to enable students to acquire an effective control over language and to develop a critical and rational insight into the system through which language operates, and, in a general sense (ii) to

give them training in observation, reasoning, and critical thought. As discussed previously, the teaching of English grammar is not necessary for teaching correct English ; it is, however, necessary to enable the learner to understood the system in generalised form and thus to find out whether what he speaks or writes is correct.

If grammar is to be taught, how is it to be taught and when is its teaching to be started ? As discussed earlier in this chapter, the teaching of grammar may start as soon as pupils have acquired some measure of command over the language. We have suggested the advisability of introducing some portions of grammar even at the Junior High School level. It is not necessary to wait until all systems have been mastered ; the pupils should be introduced to systems as they go on mastering one system after the other. Some sort of teaching of grammar will, therefore, continue throughout the duration of a student's learning process. The point which is important to remember is that forms should be practised first and reduction to systems should come afterwards.

The approach to grammar teaching should be inductive which means that instead of giving students rules first and then giving them examples in which the rules are applied, the teacher would give them examples first and help them through comparison of analogous patterns and the elements of their structure, rationalise and discover the rules. Analogy and rationalisation must go together. The moment we start rationalising on the basis of similarities that we discover in the patterns that very moment we start getting at grammatical rules. We do not separate forms from their functions. Grammatical rules are to be taught as natural living parts existing and operating in the language. No isolated rules should be taught.

The procedural steps involved in teaching English grammar include the following :

1. Presentation of the new forms and helping students to observe them critically to notice their similarities in respect of structure. For example, if the teacher is to teach the changes in narration he might present two sets of sentences—one in direct speech form and another in indirect form of speech. The students can be easily helped to discover first, the changes in direct and

indirect forms and second, the changes common to all sentences in one form. They can easily then conclude that in indirect form of speech such and such changes take place. Care should, however, be taken to introduce only one kind of patterns at one time so that students do not get confused. The principle of 'easy to difficult' and 'regular forms to irregular ones' should, however, be never neglected.

2. Comparison involves classification of analogous patterns and discovering their similarities. The teacher through well-organised questions helps pupils to do that.

3. Generalisation is the grammatical rule or rules that they discover by comparing analogous patterns.

4. Application is the last stage when the teacher applies the rule or rules deductively by giving many examples (which should in most cases be selected from the text-books that pupils use) and helps students see the operation of the rule or rules in the language.

The Inductive Method of teaching grammar is based on principles of psychology of learning, and it is very interesting and effective in the classroom. The old Deductive Method is a drudgery to students and most students do not like to learn grammar because the approach is not scientific and the method used is uninteresting.

Lessons in English grammar should be correlated with lessons in English text and composition. This can be done by selecting all material for grammar lessons from the texts that students are using. Such a procedure has a double advantage : (i) students learn grammar as part of the language that they are learning, and (ii) effective correlation can be established between text and grammar. Unfortunately, the lessons in text-books that we use in our country are not graded in respect of vocabulary and structure, and, therefore, in many cases the teacher will not be able to depend completely on text-books. But wherever such a correlation is possible it should not be lost sight of.

Blackboard is a very important friend of the teacher in all lessons, specially in a grammar lesson in which he is required to give many examples. All blackboard work must be very neat, tidy, and systematic.

CONCLUSION

To conclude our discussions on the organisation and co-ordination of a programme of English teaching from the beginning of the Junior High School stage through the end of the Secondary stage teachers will do well if :

(i)   they clearly define the aims and objectives of teaching English in general and for a specific level and grade in particular. Each lesson is a step forward in the programme towards the realisation of objectives, and, evidently, each lesson must be taught with specific objectives in view, which means that in each lesson the teacher should find out the teaching points in respect of structure, vocabulary, content and plan his teaching to realise those objectives,

(ii)   they co-operate with each other to avoid overlapping and also to ensure unity of purpose and effort,

(iii)   they try to follow the scientific techniques of teaching and cater to individual difficulties,

(iv)   they lay more emphasis on teaching language rather than any other thing, thought, or idea through language.

(v)   they have an effective programme of evaluation at every step. Evaluation as a new scientific concept in teaching will be discussed with reference to English in a separate chapter. Suffice it to mention here that the concept of evaluation has acquired a wider connotation than the term 'examination' and that its role in the total programme of education has acquired more significance today than it had previously.

Reading and Reading Material

Reading is the most important of the three R's. The man who cannot read has all his ideas limited ; the one who can read has the unbounded fields of knowledge open before him where he can rummage at will and quench his thirst for knowledge. 'Reading maketh a full man', wrote Bacon in one of his essays (Of Studies). Reading habits not only help the individual in accumulating stores of knowledge and wisdom from the cultural heritage, but are also a very ennobling and stimulating pursuit for leisure hours—leisure hours not only during the active period of life but also, and more significantly, during the period when man has retired from active life. Good reading habits facilitate the process of self-education and a person can educate himself quite independently of any assistance from a formal educational agency. If our students can build up good reading habits that would be the mark of a very successful teaching programme.

WHAT DOES 'GOOD READING HABITS' MEAN ?

Evidently, a good reader is one who can read with accuracy of pronunciation, with ease and facility, with smoothness and fluency, and with intelligence and expressiveness so that he can understand what he reads, and if he is reading aloud, he can make others understand what he is reading. Our aim in teaching reading and in helping children gradually acquire good reading habits would be to enable them to acquire a proficiency in reading that is characterised by the qualities mentioned in the foregoing sentence. In addition to mastering the machanies of reading, a good reader also develops a taste for reading. A good reader not only reads well, but he also takes pleasure in reading ; he cannot do without reading. He is always hungry for it. And the more he reads, the greater is his appetite sharpened.

THE READING PROCESS

Dr. Michael West mentions five stages in the reading process,

viz. *word recognition, word interpretation, synthesis, grouping, and skimming*.[1] William S. Gray, in the Teaching of Reading (A Second Report : 36th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education) defines the process of reading thus : "Reading involves the recognition of the important elements of meaning in their essential relation, including accuracy and thoroughness of comprehension." He further states that "reading is also a form of experience that modifies personality." In an article by James P. Soffietti, entitled "Why children fail to read" in one of the issues of the Harvard Educational Review,[2] the linguist's analysis of reading appears in the introductory note which reads : "While the reading specialist is inclined to say that the printed word merely acts as the trigger that releases a meaning we already possess, the linguist believes that the printed word acts as the trigger that releases its oral counterpart, which, in turn, releases a meaning we already possess."

Let us briefly examine the above statements. The emphasis in Dr. West's analysis begins with word-recognition (which means a knowledge of the individual words, their spelling and pronunciation) and it continues through word-interpretation (the meanings of the words), synthesis (recognising words in groups), and grouping (interpreting their meaning in proper relationship), and lastly, skimming (the process of focussing attention on the essential points and getting the meaning looked for). All these are important. Meaning through reading is arrived at by looking at the printed page and understanding the denotation and connotation of individual words in their relationship with one another. The skill in reading consists in not only gradually increasing the span of eye so that the reader can see more and more at one glance but also in increasing the speediness of the process involved in interpreting the printed symbols in terms of the thoughts or ideas they convey. A good reader is not one who reads fast but one who understands as fast as he can read.

William Gray's statement omits the emphasis on word-recognition, *i.e.* recognition of the spelling, pronunciation and meaning of a word, but that does not mean that the ommission is significant. It is implied in the statement and what he

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[1] Ref. Language in Education, Chap. The Psychology of Reading.
[2] Spring, 1958, vol. II.

emphasises is the *thought process*. The printed symbol, after all, is not to be read for its own sake ; what is essential is the meaning or thought that it releases, and reading is not for word-recognition but for understanding the whole meaning that is denoted by words by their appearing in certain relationships. The meaning is grasped by seeing the printed symbol and interpreting it in terms of the experience already existing.

The linguist's analysis of the reading process is that the printed symbol recalls the oral counterpart of the symbol and the oral counterpart releases the meaning of that symbol. This analysis is very significant for teachers of a language. Briefly explained, the process involved in reading with understanding is not the comprehension of the meaning through eye but through the vocal organs which stir up the vibrations reaching the brain and interpret the meaning. When we see a printed word we *do not only see it* but *read it* and thus get the meaning. Even when we are reading silently we are getting the meaning through the same process through which we get when we are reading aloud. The only difference is that in silent reading voice is inhibited, but that does not mean that vocal organs are not active. They are doing the same function that they do in loud reading except that they are not producing audible sounds. So the linguist's definition stands. The printed word recalls to the reader the oral counterpart of it, and the oral counterpart releases the meaning. Good readers have the whole process going on at such a fast speed that they are not conscious of it. Slow and bad readers see the word, say to themselves what it is, and then interpret it.

WHAT DOES THIS ANALYSIS OF THE READING PROCESS MEAN TO THE TEACHER ?

Evidently, it means that—

1.   The habit of reading fluently can be acquired through a gradual process of practice in reading.

2.   Good reading depends upon good speaking ; if the child can speak well he can read well. The printed word recalls the oral counterpart, *i.e.* the pronunciation of the word or words, and then only the meaning is released. If a student has difficulty in

speaking he will have difficulty in reading. *Reading is also speaking.*

3. Training in good speaking will form a very good basis for good reading.

4. The material for reading would not be difficult in respect of structure and vocabulary that students possess. (This means that in the beginning, specially when students are learning to read, the material would be only that which they have mastered orally. Students will not be required to read what they have not learnt orally).

5. Since the span of eye of small children is not long they shall be given only short sentences to read.

6. To facilitate co-ordination of aural-oral and visual activities the structures and items of vocabulary selected for reading should be not only simple and regular, but students should also have opportunities of seeing the same items again and again. (As in speech the rule is that practice makes one perfect so also in reading constant practice is needed).

7. If students cannot read properly the sentences might be broken up in meaningful units which might be short phrases, and students might repeat, first the units and then the whole sentence. The backward building up technique deserves some mention here. If, for example, students cannot read the sentence 'The boy goes to school at 10 O'clock' properly, let them repeat the meaningful units from the end—first 'at 10 O'clock'......... then 'to school at 10 O'clock'.........then 'goes to school at 10 O'clock.........., and finally the whole sentence. This technique is very useful to teach students good intonation. There are two advantages in drilling the students from the end and working toward the beginning of the sentence. First, they are acquiring a sense of security and they feel encouraged to speak. They might not be able to read the whole sentence and so might feel discouraged. Reading in short units is easy and they can do that. Second, they can pick up the necessary intonation more easily when repetition is from the end than when it is from the beginning.

8. Reading word by word should not be encouraged as speaking word by word is not desirable. One cannot speak or read with proper intonation if one reads word by word.

Besides, in English, and also in other languages, words are spoken with varying degrees of pitch and within a certain rhythm which it is not possible for a learner to grasp if he reads word by word. In English specially, the problem is very much complicated because of the heavy and weak stresses that certain words receive in any utterance. Also if a boy reads word by word he cannot read in meaningful units with proper sense. He will not be able to make others understand what he is reading and he himself will not be able to grasp the meaning easily.

9.   A corollary to this principle follows which is that while beginning to introduce reading the teacher should not start with words. If he does that students will have a tendency to read word by word. He should start with short two-word, three-word, or even four-word sentences, *e.g.* 'He goes', 'She goes', 'This is Gopal', 'That is a book', and so on.

10.   Only that vocabulary in the beginning will be used that has regular spellings. Children might have learnt many words orally without knowing their spelling. They might not be knowing the alphabet even, because in the beginning all work is oral. So when reading is being introduced care should be taken not only to introduce reading through short sentences or meaningful units written on the blackboard, but the words constituting those sentences should also have regular spellings. The purpose in the beginning is to establish association between the printed symbol and the sound as the purpose in teaching sounds in the beginning is to establish association between the ear and the spoken symbol. If the pupils do not understand the meaning at first, or even if the teacher has to use meaningless words, there is no harm. The words with irregular spelling should not be included in the material for beginners in reading. They will come in due course when students have learnt the alphabet and mastered the mechanics of writing.

TEACHING THE ALPHABETS AND SPELLING

Teaching of alphabets and the problem of teaching spelling come up for consideration as we think over the problem of reading and writing. In connection with the teaching of alphabets the teacher does not have to face any serious difficulty if he does not insist on cursive writing (like $\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B}, \mathcal{C}$, etc.) in the beginning.

If pupils transcribe from the blackboard words written in plain fashion (*e.g.* AN INKPOT) they can easily learn the alphabets of the English language. Cursive writing, if necessary, should be introduced later on. The learning of English alphabet is very easy. All that pupils need to learn is drawing of straight lines, circles, and half circles (I, O, C, D etc.), and they can be taught the 26 letters of the English alphabet. The following points may be borne in mind for teaching the alphabet :

1. Pupils should be taught to write alphabets from the blackboard. (The teacher writes clearly on the blackboard and students copy and repeat the word or words written.)

2. All words written on the blackboard should be the words that pupils know.

3. Students should be individually helped in the formation of letters.

4. They should have sufficient practice in writing each letter.

5. All letters should not be introduced simultaneously.

6. While writing on the blackboard the teacher should go on explaining how he is writing so that pupils can watch the movements of his hand.

7. Capital letters should be taught first ; and when students have learnt them, small letters should be taught. The procedure would be the same, but no cursive writing should be attempted even at this stage. Students will begin with the alphabet that appears on the printed page. They would learn to write like 'Bed', 'Dog', 'Mat' and should not be asked to write like '*Bed*' or '*Dog*' or '*Mat*', etc.

8. They should be taught to write each letter separately, of course neatly and clearly.

9. Cursive writing, if necessary, should be introduced at a much later stage.

10. In the beginning cardboard letters will provide a good material aid, and straight lines, half lines, circles, half circles cut in cardboard will provide interesting opportunities to students to form letters.

11. Flash cards will be used after students have learnt the alphabets. The teacher will show them to students and the latter will read.

12. From the very beginning, the teacher should insist that students write in straight lines, with letters written uniformly as regards size. Individual assistance is very essential at the initial stages.

13. The material for writing will be the same that students have mastered in speech.

14. All written work should be carefully checked by the teacher.

The teaching of spelling is a very formidable question owing to the nature of the English orthography. Therefore, it is essential that spelling is taught in each year of the junior and secondary school—directly in the junior school and also in the ninth and tenth grades, and indirectly in the eleventh and twelfth grades. By direct teaching we mean that regular time should be set apart in the time-table for teaching spelling, and spelling exercises should be properly organised. Indirect teaching of spelling implies that students should be asked to look at the spelling of the unfamiliar words, and the teacher should also correct errors in spelling and discuss some of the common errors in the classroom. It would be very useful if the teacher prepares a list of words which are commonly used but mis-spelt by a vast majority of students, *e.g.* 'writting' in place of 'writing', 'comming' in place of 'coming', 'begain' in place of 'began', and so on.

Before we discuss the method of teaching correct spelling let it be analysed as to why there is a tendency to mis-spell a word instead of spelling it correctly. Inspite of all that has been said regarding the perversities of English orthography we may safely assert that it takes just as much time to learn correct spelling as it does to learn incorrect spelling. (It may also be said of pronunciation—it takes only as much time and energy to teach and learn good pronunciation as it does to teach and learn bad pronunciation). The blame, on the basis of this argument, lies to a great extent on the shoulders of the teacher. We, however, do not say that the entire responsibility is of the teacher and the learner is not to be blamed at all. Many students are not able to learn good pronunciation and spelling because of certain physical and mental handicaps they suffer from. The teacher's task with such children is very difficult, and some

special techniques are necessary for teaching physically, mentally, and emotionally handicapped children. But so far as a normal child is concerned, the responsibility is entirely of the teacher whether he teaches him good pronunciation and spelling or bad pronunciation and spelling. Much depends upon how he organises his work and what model he sets to students to follow.

Just as pronunciation is a matter of co-ordination of vocal organs to produce certain sounds with a certain intonation, so also spelling is a matter of co-ordination of vocal organs and muscles of hands involved in writing. There would be found many students who would spell a word correctly when asked to do that orally, but who would spell that word wrongly when required to write, specially when they write rapidly. This shows lack of co-ordination between the speaking and writing organ. Conversely, there would be found many students, and adults specially, who, more often than not, might be confused regarding the spelling of a word, and then would write that again and again to bring their writing habits to confirm that the spelling they give is correct. Just as with good practice one does not have to look at the letters, one by one, to read what word they constitute, but one looks at the whole word and recognises what it is, so also, in writing, a person, with good practice, does not have to go on spelling a word orally to ensure that what he is writing is correct, but he is simply conscious, at first, of the idea, then of the language symbols through which it is to be represented, and finally of the total graphic representation of it. What we mean to say can be illustrated through an example : Take the word 'lieutenant' for instance, which has a /f/ sound (in RP), though obviously, no letter is there from the traditional alphabet which usually represents that sound. In writing 'lieutenant' a person who has acquired correct habits in spelling does not have to recall all the letters and their sequence that constitute the word, but he writes the word *quite unconsciously without being conscious* of the letters and their sequence, and he writes it correctly. It is only a person with less practice in writing and a poor hold over the spelling who has to spell each letter, l, i, e, u, t, e, n, a, n, t, for himself while writing the word 'lieutenant'. What is true of a difficult word like 'lieutenant' is true of simple words as well, and the matter of

teaching correct spelling is, therefore, a matter of building up good co-ordination between speaking and writing habits.

Does this mean that a pupil who cannot speak properly cannot write properly ? To a degree the answer is 'yes' because a pupil who cannot speak correctly cannot read correctly, and since he cannot read correctly, he cannot write correctly. This is true not only of the structure of language but also of the mechanics of writing. Yet this is only one of the factors so far as the problem of teaching spelling is concerned. There are some others which account for poor spelling of students. They may be briefly analysed as follows :—

1. **Poor pronunciation.** It is argued by some people that since the English language is mostly unphonetic, so there is no relationship between poor pronunciation and poor spelling. Such a notion is far from being true because students who can pronounce words properly are found to be less erring in spelling than those who have bad pronunciation. The relationship between pronunciation and spelling in English, though not very close, is yet very significant provided that the teacher classifies words properly for teaching spelling. The classification should be done in the initial stages by taking words that have a regular spelling like—

(a)   bit, sit, hit, chit, chip,............and so on
(b)   beat, read, heat, cheat, cheap,.........and so on
(c)   bat, sat, hat, chat, chap,...........and so on
(d)   bite, site, hite, chide,...........and so on (not 'give')
(e)   rope, joke, sole, mole, hole,......(not 'soap' or 'road').

In this way a teacher can collect many words from students' vocabulary at different levels and put them in categories according to their pronunciation and regularity in spelling. After that he can take words which are half regular and half irregular in spelling, for example,

{ boat, soap, road, coal,......
{ bone, rope, sole, pole,.........etc.

Irregular spellings should be taken up last of all.

The teaching of spelling through good pronunciation is also possible by giving students certain rules of pronunciation though such rules are very few and, except in the case of one or two,

there are always exceptions to them. The following rules may be helpful :—

(a) the sound /ʃn/ at the end of a word is usually spelt as 'tion'.

(b) The sound /dʒəs/ at the end is usually spelt as 'gious' or 'geous'.

(c) The sound /li/ at the end is spelt as 'ly'.

(d) There is a rule that if there is confusion whether it is 'ie' or 'ei' in a word like 'believe' or 'receive' it should be remembered that after 'c' it will be 'ei' as in 'receive' or 'deceive', and in all other cases it will be 'ie', *e.g.* 'believe', 'retrieve', etc. A notable exception is 'seize'.

Several rules can be formed for inflections and derivatives too, *e.g.*

(a) If a word has a consonant between two vowels at the end, then the last vowel is usually dropped while adding 'ing' without doubling the consonant, *e.g.* write-writing, come-coming, bite-biting, and so on.

(b) If the last letter is a consonant—'g' or 'l' or 'n' or 'r'—and a vowel precedes it, then the consonant would be doubled if 'ing' is added, *e.g.* drag-dragging, run-running, fulfil-fulfilling, refer-referring, etc. If the last letter is 't' and it is preceded by a short vowel sound the /t/ is also doubled, *e.g.* sit-sitting, hit-hitting, shut-shutting, let-letting. But if the /t/ is preceded by a long vowel sound it is usually not doubled, *e.g.* beat-beating, sort-sorting, start-starting, and so on. /d/ at the end is never doubled.

(c) The derivatives—'ness', 'ment', 'ious', 'eous', 'dity', 'city', 'ion', 'tion', 'hood', 'dom', etc.—have a fixed spelling and a fixed pronunciation.

(d) The inflections—'ed',—'d',—'t',—'en',—'ing', etc. also follow rules as they are added to words. Many rules can be formulated by the teacher as he sees 'y' at the end changed into 'i' if 'ed' is added, 'f' changed into 'v' if 'es' is added (provided that 'f' is not preceded by a vowel sound), and so on.

Good pronunciation and spelling exercises should be devised by the teacher to teach pronunciation and spelling simultaneously and to establish relationship between the two. Care should be taken that a rule is not as much emphasised as its practice. The

pupil might be knowing a rule but might be giving wrong spelling as a student might be knowing rules of grammar but might be writing wrong English.

Many errors in spelling are made in the formation of plurals and possessives. No rules regarding the adding of 's' and 'es' may be got memorised by students. Rules for possessives are fixed and they should be taught.

We have dragged this relationship between good pronunciation and good spelling a little farther than what was relevant within the scope of this chapter. But we have done that with a specific purpose which is that most teachers at the Junior High School level, and many also at the Secondary level, do not think that it is necessary to emphasise good pronunciation to teach good spelling. The only method they use is of 'memorisation' which is, no doubt, essential, but it can be made more effective and useful through establishing relationship between organs of speech and those of writing.

2. **Wrong approach to teaching spelling.** The usual procedure of teaching spellings of isolated words and asking students to memorise the spelling of each word is very dull and monotonous. To those whose memory is not sharp the method is very uninteresting and unappealing. The approach to teaching spelling should be scientific.

3. **Wrong ideas given by some teachers.** The practice of telling students that 'i' stands for 'इ' (short 'i' sound) or 'ee' for 'ई' (long 'i' sound) or 'ch' is 'च' or 'a' is 'अ' or 'आ' is most pernicious and students either learn wrong pronunciation or wrong spelling. The sounds represented by 'ch' for example in 'cheap', 'machine' and 'stomach' are completely different from each other. We have mentioned this point in a previous chapter and discussed it too.

4. **Teaching of spelling is not given as much attention as it deserves.** Most teachers do not teach spelling directly at the Junior High School level. At the Secondary level they do not teach at all. All that they do is *to correct* wrong spelling given by pupils ; *they do not teach* spelling.

5. Spelling drills are not organised in a way so that they might be interesting.

6. Sufficient practice is not given to students.

As with other aspects of language teaching, so with spelling also, work should be organised on some such lines as have been indicated above which, briefly put, are direct teaching of spelling in lower grades and indirect teaching in higher grades, organisation of material scientifically, avoiding wrong notions which students might form, giving them some rules wherever possible and providing to them opportunities to see, speak, and write the words again and again. Good habits in spelling facilitate reading and if students develop an insight into the spelling of English they can guess the pronunciation of a word too even though the word may be unfamiliar to them. Good speaking leads to good reading, and good reading to good writing. When the three skills have been mastered, then each of them contributes to greater proficiency in others, for if you want to write something very good, you have to read thoroughly, and as you read more and more you develop the capacity to speak with greater confidence and command.

BUILDING UP GOOD READING HABITS

Reading habits are built up only through a gradual process and, as is the case with the cultivation of all habits, the cultivation of reading habits also depends upon two factors, *viz.*

(1) The realisation of the necessity of acquiring a habit. (This will evoke the necessary interest and attention.)

(2) The acquisition of desirable habits through the proper process. (This involves, on one hand the selection and organisation of material through which the habits are developed and, on the other hand, the process of continued practice reinforced through proper stimuli and incentive from the guide.)

Let us give these two factors a little attention :

1. It is very essential, at first, for the students to realise the importance of building up reading habits. They should be made to understand that upon their reading habits depends their progress and that by cultivating good reading habits they can acquire the knowledge and information that they need. In other words, they should be encouraged to build up proper attitudes for reading, and that they can do when teachers provide to them the necessary impetus and incentive on one hand, and material facilities on the other. It may be mentioned here

that the responsibility for encouraging students to acquire reading habits is not of the teachers of languages alone. It is a responsibility which all teachers of all subjects have to share. The language teacher can teach students how to start reading, but he alone cannot help them develop good reading habits. So is the case with the building up of proper attitudes. All teachers have to emphasise to the students how important it is for them to acquire habits of reading. They should also provide to them the essential motivation to read. Building up proper attitudes and developing good reading habits are thus the essential requisites for acquiring knowledge and cultivating many-sidedness of interests, and teachers should co-operate with each other to help students acquire them.

2. As mentioned previously, reading habits are developed very slowly in the beginning. The first steps are very difficult and need a very scientific approach. If students pick up certain wrong habits from the very beginning, *e.g.* reading word by word, or stammering while reading, or reading by moving fingers on the printed line, or any other such habit, they would persist with them and they won't be able to acquire proficiency in reading. There is also another danger if students pick up wrong habits, which is that they might develop certain complexes or suffer from emotional strains as a result of their incapability to read properly and not be able to keep pace with other students in the classroom. Such complexes and emotional strains have a very disastrous effect not only on the reading proficiency of the students but on their whole personality so that the retardation in one field becomes the cause of retardation in other fields leading to a disruption of the whole personality. Care should, therefore, be taken to help each individual student in picking up right type of habits from the very beginning. The teacher should not be impatient if a child is slow, and he will realise at a later stage that his patience with the slow child proved useful to him as well as to the child.

It has been observed above that material for reading at different grades should be very carefully selected. In the previous chapter we have discussed what type of books should be used and how they should be used. The material in respect of vocabulary and structure should be properly graded too and the

contents of the lessons should be within the mental grasp of students—*i.e.* the ideas, or thoughts, or experiences that occur in the lessons should be such as they can understand and appreciate according to the maturity level of their age.

Psychological investigations into the nature of human personality, the interests and abilities of students, influence of nature and nurture on their emotional and mental make-up, their tastes and aptitudes, etc. have revealed certain interesting things which will help the teacher at different stages. He can know what kind of material, stories, folk-tales, fairy tales, legends, dialogues etc., can appeal to boys and girls of different age-groups. The value of proper illustrations in the text-books has also been recognised and the teacher of English has not only to apply his discretion for selecting reading material for students, but he has also to use a vast amount of scientific research material to give him proper guidance as to the selection of material for students differing in tastes, interests, and maturity levels.

So far as the point of structure and vocabulary is concerned the teacher should select those texts in which the material has been adapted to the level of the students' command over language. Students will never feel interested if they cannot read a book with understanding and if at every step there is some point of language that baulks comprehension. This is true of all material that is prescribed for supplementary reading, and as we have observed in the previous chapter, it is supplementary reading material at the senior stages that gives students sufficient opportunities for practice in reading and stimulates them to read more and more. If the material in a text-book presents difficulties in respect of structure and vocabulary, that text-book should be treated as a text for detailed study and the teacher should teach it intensively in the classroom. In such a text-lesson students learn how to read ; they do not have opportunities for practice in reading. As mentioned before, the first steps are to be taken very cautiously while teaching students how to read.

While preparing a systematic programme of teaching reading and helping students acquire good reading habits students will be encouraged to acquire the following abilities through lessons in reading.

(a) Comprehension—understanding the language and grasping the contents,

(b) reading with correct stress and intonation,

(c) acquiring power of correct spelling,

(d) developing a linguistic sense,

(e) understanding the proper use of pauses,

(f) reading with ease, intelligence, and fluency,

(g) developing an interest in language.

Reading is a matter of concentrating on the import of words rather than on the words themselves and consequently, the teacher should so train his students that they can establish such associations in respect of language that will facilitate their attention on the meanings and release them as quickly as possible when they see printed symbols.

The following points deserve mention in respect of teaching reading to beginners :—

1. The introduction of reading should be deferred until students have acquired a certain amount of vocabulary and ability to identify standard letter groups (*i.e.* th, thr, and, ten, but, etc.). In other words reading should follow speech. It is neither possible nor advisable to introduce reading before students have learnt to use their ears and speech organs. All reading and writing should be *the result of speech.*

2. There is no point in taking up lessons which contain difficult words. If such words are there, let them be taught first before students see them in print.

3. In the beginning no exotic or fancy vocabulary should be introduced. We must learn to walk before we can run ; hence the commonplace should precede the exotic.

4. From the very beginning students should be encouraged to read fluently. This depends upon two things : (i) The material for reading should be known to pupils, and (ii) the teacher should give a good model reading and stimulate students to read after his model. Errors in reading should be corrected on the spot.

Good reading depends upon good comprehension. If students can understand and concentrate on the import of what they read they can read well. Conversely, if students are poor at reading it is because they do not concentrate on import and their

comprehension is poor. One cannot feel interested in reading if one cannot understand what is being read. Reading without understanding is atrocious. The material that is presented to students for reading should, therefore, be the material that they can understand.

Correction of errors in reading should be made on the spot if the number of errors is small. If most of the students make many errors, the teacher should wait till the end of the lesson and then correct all errors in students' speech.

The mode of correction should be positive, and not negative. The teacher should not repeat incorrect sounds or intonation of students ; rather, he should give them positive help and tell them how they should pronounce a word or read a group of words.

Fluent reading means reading with correct pauses, pronunciation, and intonation. Reading word by word should be discouraged from the very beginning and students should be made to read in proper units. Fluent reading implies the following :—

(a) Giving proper emphasis to stressed syllables and making them recur at proper intervals within a thought group.

(b) Weakening unstressed words or syllables.

(c) Organising words in proper speech units, thought-groups or meaningful units, and reading with proper pauses.

(d) Reading with proper pitch and with attention to the rhythm of the sentence, not in jerks or unnatural jolts.

(e) Reading in such a way that the whole sentence fits into a proper intonation pattern.

Learning to read fluently also takes as much time as learning to read badly. The teacher should, from the very beginning, try to encourage students to read properly. Fluent reading depends upon fluent speaking and if the teacher has enabled students to speak a language fluently, his task would be greatly facilitated.

5. For achieving the objective of fluent reading the teacher should not start with single words ; rather, he should give students short sentences to read from the very beginning. Sufficient practice is necessary in reading too as it is necessary in speaking.

6. After students have learnt to read short sentences within a limited vocabulary, the teacher should go on teaching them

new words rapidly. Substitution tables can be very helpful in teaching new words and giving practice in reading. The great advantage of substitution tables is not only to give students practice in reading but in giving them practice *in reading correctly* with proper intonation. You take a sentence and read it, and if you have to substitute just one word for some word in the sentence without, of course, changing the structural meaning, you find that the intonation of the sentence remains unchanged. Hence by using substitution tables a teacher can give students good practice in reading with proper intonation.

7. It is also very important that the teacher maintains a continuity in reading material. If he does that only then can he sustain interest of students. This continuity will be in the form of gradation in respect of structure and content on one hand, and in the form of contextual sequence in the contents on the other. If students are reading something about school, let them read more about it, and then something which comes within their environment.

8. All types of reading—choral or collective, oral or loud, silent, intensive and extensive—have their utility at different stages and in different types of lessons. The teacher should be able to decide when to organise what, and how. The relative merits of different kinds of reading will be discussed in this chapter at a later stage.

9. As pointed out above, control of reading material in the beginning is very essential as control in vocabulary or structure or compositional work is very important. Let not the student feel that he is a happy-go-lucky improviser, and let him not wander at his will. If he is permitted to do that he will surely go astray. It is very important that we remember that the whole language is a system and we can give our students certain habits and skills in the use of the language only when we approach the language—whether it is to hear it, or speak it, or read it, or write it—systematically. If we leave our students to hear or speak or read items of language as disconnected from each other his knowledge would be most perfunctory and fragmentary. He will not be able to acquire a hold over the language systematically and consequently, his production will also be unsystematic.

By not controlling the material in the beginning we not only delay the process of learning language by students but we are also guilty of a lot of wastage too. The problem of habit formation is a very steady and systematic process and the teacher is to know how a certain habit is formed and how it leads to the formation of other habits. If he has no insight into that process he cannot teach effectively and economically.

10. As soon as students have started reading they should be given some lessons in advance and do reading at home.

In selecting material for beginners the teacher would do well if he uses a text which contains material that is interesting, structures and vocabulary that are most frequent and useful and that are known to students. If they are not known to them, he should introduce those that are easily teachable and that students can learn. He should see that abstract vocabulary is not there, that the vocabulary in respect of all kinds of words— name words, action words, quality words, function words, etc.— has been selected on the basis of its frequency of use and usefulness for students, and lastly, that the material is all graded from the beginning to the end. No attempt should be made to teach disorganised or ill-organised material. If the text-book does not have good organisation the teacher can do that to a certain degree. There is no point in teaching English in a 'broken' way for it would yield only 'broken' results.

SENIOR STAGE—BUILDING UP GOOD READING HABITS

Reading habits, as we have seen, are built up only as a gradual process and the teacher should not be impatient with the slowness of students. It has also been observed that the problem of habit formation in reading is a problem in which each teacher has a responsibility. Though English is no longer the medium of instruction at the secondary stage and the responsibility of enabling students to acquire good reading habits in English is to a considerable degree of the teacher of English, yet it is also psychologically justified that reading habits in mother-tongue affect reading habits in the foreign language as well—the sense of rhythm, pitch, intonation, articulation, enunciation, and the full command over respiratory and vocal organs have a transfer value, and if students develop good reading habits

in one language they would find it easy to acquire good habits in another language as well. All teachers of different subjects should, therefore, encourage students to do reading in their subjects and thus contribute to each other's share in the collective responsibility.

If students have acquired the habit of reading with correct pronunciation, intonation, and intelligence at the Junior High School stage, then the task of the teacher at the senior stage is made very easy. He has to take up the task further ; he has not to concentrate so much on teaching students how to read as on giving them more and more motivation to read and thus help them acquire habits of skilled readers. One has only to give support to the infant in the beginning when he is learning to walk, but once he has learnt to balance himself and take slow steps he can go ahead himself and learn to walk rapidly and then to run provided that there is motivation for that. How is the teacher of English to provide the necessary motivation to students ?

1. The primary condition for all motivation is interest. If the material is sufficiently interesting, it will absorb the attention of students and they would like to read. The teacher has, therefore, to understand what kind of material his students would be interested in, and he should suggest readings accordingly.

2. If students can understand what they read, and if the language used in the books they read is within their mental reach, they would get incentive to read. We have discussed previously how important it is to select books for supplementary reading very carefully.

3. The teacher should stimulate students to read by correlating the classroom work with the suggested readings to which he refers. If the exercises and assignments given in the classroom do not take the students beyond the text-book that they use in the classroom, they would not have any incentive to read extensively.

4. The teacher should always encourage students to become self-dependent. If he makes his teaching a one-man's show, if he himself does everything in the classroom by giving meanings, explanations, answers to questions, the students would

become passive listeners and they would not do much work themselves. But if, on the other hand, the teacher assigns lessons in advance, encourages use of a dictionary, sets specific questions for which students should come prepared, suggests to them how they can do all that, he would surely stimulate them to read and work independently. The teacher should never, in the course of teaching, underestimate the importance of co-operation of students, and he should always make them active participants in the development of the lesson.

5. Setting assignments, suggesting readings, referring to books in the library—these only are not enough ; and the teacher should always keep in mind that a programme of thorough supervision (in the broad sense) is very necessary. He should give pupils guidance where they need, should check their work and progress regularly, and keep a record of the student's progress in reading. It would be a good thing if the teacher kept records of individual students and could know how many books or how much extra-reading material each pupil used.

6. Library has a great value for stimulating reading habits. It is a place where students find a congenial atmosphere and also where they can choose what they would like to read. The librarian can do a lot to stimulate students to read. It is a good practice to have regular provision for library work on the school time-table. The teacher can take students in the library period to the library and help each student to take from the library what he wants and what best suits his needs and interests.

7. Students will not be tempted to read, specially in the beginning of the senior course, if they are not sure of proper guidance and encouragement. The programme of giving them guidance and the necessary stimuli is a co-operative responsibility of all teachers. Since English is not the medium of instruction at the secondary stage the teachers of different subjects will encourage students to read more and more in their own subjects, thereby providing to them the necessary motivation to develop reading habits. If they develop reading habits in their own mother-tongue, the teacher of English can take advantage of the situation and transfer their attitude towards reading in English. Cultivation of reading habits depends to a great extent upon the right type of attitudes which have to be built up from the

beginning and for which it is the co-operative responsibility of all teachers to help students from the very beginning.

8. The atmosphere of the school, provision of reading facilities in the library, the general procedures that teachers adopt for teaching, the traditions of the school, facilities and incentives available at home — these are all external factors which enable students cultivate a taste for reading and acquire greater and greater proficiency in reading. If the school. atmosphere is vicious, if classroom work is mechanical and confined only to preparing students for a certain examination, if teaching procedures are dull and uninteresting making students just passive listeners, if parents do not co-operate with teachers and do not feel obliged to discharge their responsibilities to their boys or girls, then the task of every teacher, not of English teachers only, would become difficult. Teachers have to establish certain traditions at school which will have a wholesome effect on the entire school atmosphere and which will motivate even those students to work who have not had any previous motivation to that effect.

KINDS OF READING : THEIR UTILITY AT DIFFERENT STAGES

(a) A division may be made between loud reading and silent reading. Though the ultimate aim in teaching reading is to enable students to acquire the habit of reading silently and independently for the assimilation of thought, the beginning has to be made with loud reading. At the initial stages when the teacher is teaching students how to read he has but to start with loud reading by students. The advantages are too obvious to be mentioned. The teacher can correct errors in students' speech, he can teach them how to read with proper pauses, pronunciation and intonation, he can help students acquire greater amount of self-confidence, can help the shy and the bash-ful, and can find out individual problems. Loud reading is the first step in learning to read and the teacher should organise it regularly and systematically.

The ultimate aim is, however, to enable students to read independently and silently for themselves. For the major part of their life, when they are involved in reading, it is silent reading

that they have to do and not loud reading. We emphasise this point specially because the habits of silent reading have to be built up very regularly and steadily. It would not be a surprise to find students who cannot read silently, and even if they do, who say that they cannot read with understanding if they do not read loudly. Many students are found to be saying that they can make out the meaning of a printed page only when they can read loudly or at least read in a slow voice. They do not get any meaning out of a printed page if they are to inhibit speech altogether. This habit is, without any argument to the contrary, undesirable and it persists only because of the fact that the students had not had the opportunities and incentives to read silently.

Silent reading should, on the other hand, facilitate comprehension. It saves a lot of energy that loud reading consumes because students have to strain their vocal organs ; it gives greater speed to the reader, and secures greater concentration. The whole class can be made active simultaneously and the teacher can give all students practice at the same time. The conditions for making silent reading effective are, in the first place, that students do not have any difficulty in respect of the language that they read, all of them having been removed before students are asked to read silently, and, in the second place, that they should have the necessary motivation to read. The teacher can provide motivation by setting questions in advance, by writing them on the blackboard or by pointing to those mentioned among the exercises in the book, and then asking pupils to read silently. The habit of silent reading can be acquired only through a gradual and steady process, and the senior school stage is the most suitable time when students can be encouraged to develop this habit, though towards the end of the Junior High School stage, *i.e.* in the third year of English the teacher can set lessons in advance and ask students to come prepared for questions on them. Silent reading, whenever it is conducted, should be really *silent* and no humming should be allowed. Students should not even move their lips. The habit of moving finger along the printed lines, while doing silent or loud reading, should always be discouraged. Since silent reading needs a calm and peaceful atmosphere, the teacher should see that there

is no disturbance in the classroom and no student disturbs others by reading loudly or by reading in a humming voice.

(b)   Another distinction is made between collective or choral reading and individual reading. Choral reading has a very important place at the initial stages when students are learning to read, and collective speaking has a great utility when pupils are learning to speak English. At the initial stages very few students would be found to be coming forward although what they are asked to read is just what they have orally mastered previously. Many would be feeling shy and diffident and some of them may not be able to recognise the written symbols with as much ease and facility as others may. Choral reading will be useful from that point of view, but it should not be overdone, and as soon as a few minutes have been devoted to choral reading the teacher should have the individuals read what he has written on the blackboard, or what is printed in the book. At the senior stage choral reading does not have much value beyond the repetition by all students of a certain word or a phrase or a meaningful unit that is not being properly read by a majority of students. As discussed previously, some sort of pronunciation drill will be necessary at all stages and it is left to the discretion of the teacher to decide when it is to be collective and when individual.

(c)   The skill to read intensively and extensively has a two-fold aspect. Intensive reading implies reading for everything— for pronunciation, for meaning of individual words, and phrases, for grasping the contents of the material read, for understanding and appreciating language and its beauties, etc. etc. It is reading, as Ruskin said, not only 'word by word but letter by letter'. Extensive reading is just collateral reading ; it is reading for pleasure and enjoyment. The reader is not concerned with the meanings of individual words ; his main concern is reading for ideas and thoughts. He may not be knowing the meanings of all the words and expressions used in what he has read but he can rest contented if he gets the main ideas and is able to appreciate them. We have discussed previously the value and the kind of material that should be given to students to read extensively. The habits of extensive reading are cultivated at the Senior High School stage and the teacher should provide to students the necessary incentive and motivation. Extensive reading

leads to developing habits of reading which are so important in all walks of life that they should be very assiduously cultivated from the beginning.

Intensive reading and extensive reading have both their relative values for students at different stages and whereas at the initial stages the teacher will concentrate on intensive reading and keep the reading material under strict control, at the higher secondary level he will give them very many opportunities to read, and will provide them with the necessary stimulation (see above) to read extensively. As observed earlier in this chapter, the material suggested for reading would be carefully selected, it should meet the needs and requirements of students, it should have a relevance to them from the point of view of classroom work, it should appeal to their interests and tastes, and it should kindle their imagination. If the reading material is not related to their experiences, if it is insipid for them, if it does not serve any purpose for them and does not have any appeal to their minds, they will not feel inclined to read.

RETARDATION IN READING : REMEDIAL MEASURES

Retardation in reading is a severe problem. If a student cannot read properly, he cannot do well in any sphere of knowledge. He will be handicapped in all ways and his progress will be baulked. Reading retardation should not be regarded as an inherent drawback produced by forces of heredity or nature. To a certain degree it is due to physical disabilities, but to a larger degree it is due to environmental factors, *viz.* lack of suitable guidance, improper handling in the beginning, lack of proper motivation, defective habits acquired from the beginning, emotional strains, uncongenial atmosphere at home and at school, sense of insecurity, unsympathetic attitude of teachers, and finally, the wrong approach to teaching reading which many teachers even now follow and who try to put the cart before the horse. The usual practice in schools in our country is that teachers try to teach reading right from the very beginning, and discarding the value of the oral approach, they start in their conventional way with the teaching of alphabets, spelling, meanings, and reading word by word. As observed earlier, this

approach is most unscientific and is not in conformity with the principles of language teaching.

Reading retardation may be apparent in one or more of the following cases :—

(i) Incapability to recognise words properly and taking time to identify a word. This is because most teachers teach reading through spelling. They teach pupils spellings of a word and ask them to spell and read. This practice is very disastrous and students pick up wrong habits. The 'look and say' approach is found to be very useful—students see the whole word and say what it is. The associations between the eye and the vocal organs are formed not through individual letters that make a word, but through the whole visual image that the printed word recalls.

(ii) Narrow span of eye and improper eye-movements. This habit is also picked up because of the traditional approach, and students concentrate on letters before they concentrate on words. Their eye moves very slowly because it moves from letter to letter. Narrow span of eye may also be due to some physical defect and weak eye-sight, but usually it is because of the faulty approach in the beginning. It is always good to have the pupils see a word or group of words and repeat that as a whole. If the material for reading is different from that which has been orally mastered by students, both types of retardation—(i) and (ii)—will result. That's why it is very necessary to remember that all lessons in the beginning will be based on the material that has been orally mastered by students. If habits of poor word-recognition and narrow span of eye are acquired from the very beginning, it will be very difficult to get rid of them later on.

(iii) Mispronunciation, inability to read with proper intonation and pauses and not reading in proper units, are absolutely the result of wrong guidance in the beginning. It takes only as much time and energy to learn wrong things as it does to learn right things. If teachers are careful from the beginning and enable students to speak and read properly, if proper corrections are made and good drills organised, students will surely pick up good habits. There is usually a factor which might render the task of the teacher difficult, and that is the

tendency to transfer speech habits acquired in mother-tongue to speech habits in learning English. Very often students, quite unconsciously, substitute the sounds and rhythm of their mother-tongue for the approximating sounds and intonation of English. Such a habit, once acquired, is difficult to be got rid of at a later stage. The older a pupil or a teacher is, the more difficult it is for him to correct his old habits. Assiduous efforts, therefore, should be made from the very beginning to teach pronunciation and intonation properly. There will, no doubt, be some tranfer even then, and the influence of first language cannot be obliterated in learning the second language, but that influence would not deprive the learner of acquiring an acceptable standard of proficiency in speech and reading.

(iv) There are certain overt behaviours of a pupil observable while he is reading which might show that he cannot read properly. They are all acquired and a teacher will do well if he does not let his students cultivate those bad habits from the beginning. The most prominent among them are—

(a) moving finger on the printed line while reading,

(b) moving lips while reading silently,

(c) moving the head as he reads from the beginning of the line to the end of it,

(d) holding or drawing the book quite to his eyes,

(e) blinking eyes if there is some new word and he is unable to attack it,

(f) stuttering or stammering (This is caused by emotional strains and nervousness also.)

(v) Proficiency in reading does not mean reading rapidly word by word, with good intonation and pronunciation. These are, no doubt, attributes of good speech, but they are not of good and quick reading when it is done silently for assimilation of thought. A skilled reader is one who can focus his attention on key words, can skip over unimportant words, has a long eye-span, and can understand thoughts and ideas symbolically written on the printed page very quickly. Such a habit can be cultivated only after regular practice in reading, and it is the result of several years of reading. Efforts should be directed to enable students to acquire skilled reading habits. If they cannot from the very beginning succeed in recognising key

words, in differentiating between content words and function words, in breaking a sentence into proper meaningful units, and in developing a broad span of recognition, they show signs of reading retardation and have to be very carefully helped.

(vi) Proficiency in reading also implies reading with quick comprehension. If a pupil cannot read with understanding, if he cannot reproduce what he has read, or cannot answer questions on his reading, if he is not able to form judgments on what he has read, it may be concluded that he is retarded in that respect. This kind of skill should be acquired by the student by the time he is in the second year of the secondary school. If after four or five years of study a student is not able to develop such a skill, he should be helped. Teachers can help students by advising them on the kind of material they should read by guiding them through reading, asking them questions, giving them exercises, and so on. Students who are retarded in reading always need individual guidance.

Reading retardation presents severe problems to the teacher, and he should be very much careful and eager to solve them. If a student is retarded in reading, he should not be discouraged ; rather, the teacher should treat him sympatheti-cally, analyse his problems and help him accordingly. Many students suffer from physical, or mental, or emotional handicaps. Such students have to be specially helped and if there is a need for some expert to be consulted, such a help should always be taken in the interest of the boys and girls who need special assistance.

To recapitulate a few important points for the classroom teacher :

(i) lessons in reading should enable the students to acquire the skill of reading with correct pronunciation and intonation,

(ii) students should cultivate the habit of reading in proper units and should read with ease, intelligence, fluency, and expressiveness,

(iii) material for reading should be selected according to the ability and interests of students,

(iv) sufficient motivation should be provided for reading,

(v) lessons in reading should be properly graded,

(vi) the utility of individual and collective reading, loud

and silent reading, intensive and extensive reading should be recognised at each stage,

(vi) good reading depends upon good speaking, and therefore, reading should be introduced only when students have acquired a certain amount of vocabulary, and some command of structures,

(vii) no exotic or fancy vocabulary should be introduced in the beginning,

(viii) correction of errors should be done on the spot and drills should be organised where necessary,

(ix) all reading material should have a continuity,

(x) all teachers in a school should co-operate to help students cultivate reading habits,

(xi) reading retardation should be deliberately met.

Everything selected should fit in the limited system which should combine minimum learning load with maximum learning of language. If sounds are properly fitted into the vocabulary which is again fitted into structural phrases, which are themselves fitted into structural patterns, the results tend to ensure good teaching and good learning justifying that the material is teachable, useful, and frequent.

7

Composition, Grammar, and Translation

In a previous chapter we have discussed the organisation of lessons in composition and grammar, and we have also discussed the true place of translation in a programme of teaching English. In this chapter we propose to discuss the problem of teaching composition, grammar, and translation in somewhat greater details, specially concentrating upon formation of good compositional habits and acquiring a hold over the mechanics of writing composition. We have proposed to talk about the teaching of translation along with composition because, in a broad sense, translation may also come under composition. Grammar is not a separate aspect of language : part of it is related to composition and part of it to other aspects of language. The essential surface of teaching grammar is to enable students to develop a rational thinking about what they speak or write, and, therefore, grammar is an essential aspect of composition in the broad sense. Ability to compose implies, along with organisation of thoughts and ideas, a command of the features of language in respect of structure, pronunciation and intonation when oral composition is involved, and a command of sentence patterns and their organisation—spelling, punctuation, and paragraphing-when written composition is involved. Since these are the mechanics of writing and are controlled by traditions of written language they are more directly associated with grammar than are the aspects of oral composition. In short, composition, grammar, and translation, are allied aspects of language and their discussion relates to a discussion of language and its components for instructional purposes. Literature is a separate function of language, and we shall discuss that in the next chapter.

THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION

We have also discussed in a previous chapter what the aims of teaching composition are, and we do not want to repeat them

here. Suffice it to mention here that our purpose in teaching composition is to see that a child's mental possessions—his thoughts, ideas, feelings, etc.—do not remain hanging loose and scrappy in his mind ; rather, they are so grouped and interrelated with each other, and so easily available for orderly use, that he does not have any problem in communicating them to others. This implies two things, *viz.* (i) the learner should receive ideas, experiences, thoughts, etc. systematically so that when he has to communicate with others he reproduces what he has received, systematically, and (ii) he should have the necessary elements of language to communicate.

All knowledge is intended to be used in life ; one of the essential, or rather, the most essential function of knowledge is communication. If it remains in a cold storage with the learner and if he is not able to use it, it is useless. If the learner has to use it for himself and by himself, he may not be required to communicate, but the moment he responds to social relations and comes in contact with others, he is required to communicate, and there is the functional value of knowledge.

Communication is an art which is acquired through gradual efforts and systematic practice. A person may be knowing language very thoroughly, but he may not be able to communicate properly. As has been pointed out above, effective communication demands not only a command of language but also, and more significantly, a systematic presentation of ideas, thoughts, and experiences. A vast majority of students at the secondary level do not communicate effectively, not only in English but also in their mother-tongue, because of their poor hold over one or the other or both aspects of the communicative skill pointed out above.

It is a common complaint these days that, along with deterioration in the standards of English, there has also been a deterioration in the standards of mother-tongue, and teachers complain of students' inability to organise their ideas properly and to present them in correct language. When we realise that even in the case of their native language students are not able to give evidence of their good command, we have certainly genuine reasons to conclude that the skill to compose properly and to communicate effectively is not properly acquired by students,

and that there is a high degree of correlation between compositional skill in one's mother-tongue and that in a foreign language. There is also another point which deserves attention here, which is that the skill to compose and communicate properly is acquired by students, as is the reading skill acquired, when all teachers co-operate to help pupils acquire that. It is not the language teachers only who have to feel solely responsible for the task ; all teachers must feel obliged to share this responsibility ; in fact, all are teachers of their own subjects and also teachers of composition because all knowledge is intended to be communicative. If students do not do well at school or in public life, if they communicate poorly, if they cannot organise their ideas and thoughts coherently and cannot use effective language to present them, it is the teaching community in general, and not language teachers only, that should think seriously about the problem.

WHAT IS WRONG IN OUR APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM OF COMPOSITION TEACHING ?

Let us briefly analyse the situation as it is in our schools and see against its background the weaknesses of the current practices. It is undoubtedly true that there is a positive loathing of the pupils to composition. They do not like composition, and, at the secondary stage, a vast majority of them avoid to do compositional assignments. They try to find several kinds of excuses, and if compelled to do work, they seek the help of more proficient students in their class or copy out answers to questions from bazar-notes or guide-books. Evidently, there is something wrong with our approach. Since expression is natural and necessary for every child, he is by nature inclined to express himself but if he does not like to do that there is something that impedes his expression. What might that be ? A few factors have frequently been mentioned :

(i) The type of compositional assignments that we give is all uniform, mechanical, and uninteresting. We little try to organise work and exercises for different grades and for different types of students in the same grade, which is very essential. In a previous chapter we have emphasised why control and grading in composition are necessary and how that can be done. Unless

teachers co-ordinate work at different stages, and plan exercises and their types for different grades, and for different students in the same grade, students would not feel attracted to do compositional assignments. All students do not have similar interests, nor all have an equal command of language. Some variation in the selection of exercises to suit the interests of and abilities of students is necessary, as it is necessary in all other subjects.

(ii) We try to expect too much written work from students. There is a good deal of effort for educating the eye at the expense of the ear. Why do we do that? Partly because we think that a student can acquire a command of language by writing the language, and that the written expression of a child is a soothing evidence of his hold over the language. Also partly because we think that by exacting written work from students we have concrete, tangible, measurable, and certifiable evidence of students' progress by which we can satisfy principals, administrators, and parents. It is unfortunate that principals, inspectors, and parents — all want some visible and tangible evidence which must show that the child is being educated. Little do we realise that writing is not language and that habits of writing are dependent upon habits of speech. If students have an oral command of what they are going to write, their compositional work would be good and effective. That's why we have stressed in a previous chapter that oral work must precede all written work, and whatever students have to write, it must first be orally discussed in the classroom. In the lower classes all written work should be strictly based on oral work. "As are the habits of speech, so will be the habits of writing."

(iii) A critical analysis of the types of questions set in examinations and exercises given in classrooms at different levels will reveal that we expect too much laboured composition from our students. "We insist upon excellence and penmanship from the very beginning. We inhibit the child's inventiveness and spontaneity, and we double and redouble toil because we prescribe ridiculous standards of mechanical facility." This does not mean that we should tolerate slipshod, slovenly, or careless work; but this does mean sincere, childlike work. At the initial stages, it would be a monstrosity to expect elegance and excellence.

(iv) There is a wide gap between what we teach and what

we examine. This is very true of the teaching done at the secondary level and the expectations of examiners for the public examinations. As a rule, students whose English is faulty and whose expression is poor, but who have a knowledge of the contents, are penalised in examinations more than those who have very little knowledge of contents but who have a fair expression. The situation is like this : in the classroom we teach students words and their meanings, explanations of sentences, analysis of ideas and contents, main points in the thought-process of authors and poets, etc. but in the examination we expect them to write good English. Whereas the emphasis in the classroom is on subject-matter and contents of the book, that in the examination is on language. This dichotomy between teaching and testing techniques is to a considerable extent responsible for poor expression of students and it claims our attention towards changing our outlook and methods. If we devote a major part of our time to teaching and drilling students in elements of language which means word-forms, word-arrangements, appropriate use of words, phrases and idioms, organising sentence-patterns, proper use of punctuation, etc. we shall see that students acquire a greater command of the language. And once they get on going well with the language the question of analysis of contents and subject-matter will be greatly facilitated and the teacher will not have to exhaust his energy in explaining and re-explaining, narrating and relating points and ideas contained in the book. A lot of time and energy is wasted in dictating selected answers and questions to students who too fritter away much of their energy and time in unintelligently memorising them in the expectation that questions would be set on them. It is very regrettable that a vast majority of students at the higher secondary stage do enormous work by way of cramming answers to questions and yet fail in the examinations because it was just a chance that they did not find the questions they memorised in the question-paper. In our informal discussions with teachers we have been convinced that such practices are adopted by students even in their mother-tongue, and that is one of the most essential factors responsible for deterioration in standards in students' mother-tongue.

(v) The selection of exercises in lower classes and that of

topics in senior classes deserves considerable attention. Most of the teachers do not give sufficient thought to the problem. Most subjects selected at the secondary stage are very hackneyed and insipid, *e.g.* 'a journey by train or bus', 'a rainy day', 'a football match', 'a motor-car accident', and so on. We do not say that such topics will not be included for compositional work. What is important is that subjects should present a wide variety of interest and students should feel motivated to express their ideas on them.

Topics should be of common interest and they should be selected from the students' own life—from their environment and experience, their reading and learning. No student can write anything on, or say anything about, something that does not exist within his experience—experience acquired either through physical contact with the environment or through reading and learning. It would be ridiculous to expect pupils write a composition on 'an aeroplane flight' or 'a mad-dog bite' if they did not have that kind of experience. It is very essential, therefore, to discover and arouse students' interests and plan compositional exercises and assignments accordingly.

(vi) Along with a knowledge of students' experiences and interests it is also essential that we do not expect from them any kind of work for which they do not have adequate vocabulary. Unfortunately, this principle is also neglected. The result is ridiculous English that we come across with. If a student does not know how to express the movements, 'taking off' and 'landing', in the case of an aeroplane, and how to express his feelings while flying at an altitude of, say 20,000 ft., what would he write about an aeroplane flight ? We have met students who say that they would memorise from some guide-book 'an essay' on 'a journey by train' and then, if they were to write on any journey, or even an aeroplane flight, what they would do be only to replace a few words by some other words, *e.g.* 'train' by 'aeroplane', 'journey' by 'flight', and so on. We were simply surprised, also shocked, to hear from many students that in the case of 'styles of writing' of authors they would cram up one answer containing some general points and all they would do would be to change the names of authors in the answers. And they said that they could get 'pass marks' that way. It is a pity

that our methods of teaching and testing allow so many wasteful practices adopted by students.

(vii) Lengthy compositions that some teachers are very fastidious of requiring their students to write are again a cause of bad work. If students have to write long answers or compositions, they not only feel over-burdened with work, but they also insert superfluous and irrelevant material in their composition. They write hurriedly and thus commit many errors too. They forget to have any regard for conciseness and brevity, and try to write as many pages as they can. Let it be borne in mind by students that it is quality, and not quantity, that counts ; let them write short answers and short composition, and try to be precise and brief. Students should always be discouraged from writing long sentences. Care should be taken from the beginning that they write in small paragraphs and divide their paragraphs suitably.

(viii) Checking of all compositional work is very necessary. The traditional practice of correcting errors of students has a major weakness that it does not help the student to be critical about what he writes. He thinks that his business is to write and the teacher's business is to correct. The student does not give, under these circumstances, sufficient thought to what he is writing. He does not cultivate the attitude of self-reliance and he does assignments almost mechanically. The teacher should, as far as possible, help the student to correct his own errors. His business is to point out the errors that the student has made, but he should always ask the student to find out what error that is and what its corrected form would be. An experienced headmaster once related the story of a student who had written 'I have wrote'. The teacher made the necessary correction and asked the student to write 'I have written' twenty times. The student did that, and then wrote, 'Sir, I have wrote' 'I have written' twenty times !

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH REGARD TO COMPOSITION-TEACHING ?

We have answered the question above while discussing the weaknesses of our traditional approach. Let the broad points be summarised :—

(i)   All composition work should be graded and co-ordinated at different levels.

(ii)   Exercises and topics should be selected in conformity with students' interests.

(iii)   All work during the first three years should be strictly controlled.

(iv)   No written work should be expected during the first few months.

(v)   Free composition should start only at the senior level and it should be organised through gradual steps.

(vi)   Compositional exercises should present a variety and, at the senior stage, would include everything that comes under precis writing, explanations, short answers, theme-writing, letter-writing, paraphrasing, dictation, and even translation.

(vii)   Oral work must precede written work. "As are a child's habits of oral expression, so will his habits of written expression tend to become." In other words, "his written language and the structure of his written work will be pre-determined by his previously acquired oral habits and practice". Don't forget the fundamental principle of language learning : "hearing before speaking, speaking before reading, and reading before writing".

(viii)   Don't emphasise too much skill in penmanship, but emphasise order from the very beginning. The student should not be left to write as he wishes to. He must be trained to think and write systematically. For that purpose it is essential that oral discussions are held in the classroom and all discussions are organised systematically. "Good representation, and effective expression are dependent upon good presentation and effective impression." If the boy at the senior level thinks in scraps and spasms it is because in the classroom no attempt has been made to train him to think systematically. No student can write composition without having a plan. "He will (only) scintillate, not glow ; will ramble routeless and goalless until he finds himself at some lucky 'there'. Ramble, saunter, dare, by all means and occasionally set out to do nothing else ; but invariably to trust to luck, is to catch an ignominious fall."

(ix)   All composition work should be carefully checked, and the teacher should mark, not correct, students' errors. Several kinds of symbols (*e.g.* S for spelling mistake, G for grammatical

mistake, and so on) can be devised by teachers and explained to students as well. As far as possible, students should be helped to correct their own mistakes. Common errors may be discussed by the teacher in the classroom.

The following common mistakes, *apart from grammatical,* usually occur in students' composition at the secondary stage :

(a)   untrue or unreal statement,

(b)   exaggeration,

(c)   repetition,

(d)   choice of wrong words,

(e)   involved sentences,

(f)   misuse of subordinating conjunctions,

(g)   incorrect balance of sentences, *e.g.* 'He is an idle and fool man.'

These, when found occurring in student's work, should be discussed in the classroom and special exercises should be given on them from time to time.

MECHANICS OF WRITING COMPOSITION : SENTENCES, PARAGRAPHS, CHOICE OF APPROPRIATE WORDS, PUNCTUATION, AND SPELLING

1.   **Sentences, paragraphs, and words.** In writing composition the organisation of the subject-matter into a coherent system and presenting it through suitable sentences using appropriate words are very important. A loosely connected chain of ideas, presented through sloppy sentence structures would unvariably indicate sloppy processes. It is important, therefore, that students are trained to write systematically, in suitable sentences, and with due care to choose and use the appropriate words and phrases. For teaching students how to write systematically the following points deserve mention :

(i)   Students should not think confusedly. The teacher should control their thinking. He can do that by organising discussions in the classroom systematically. For example, if students have to write a composition or a synopsis of a story, let them understand the main points and arrange them in a sequence. Sequential arrangement of thoughts and ideas is very important.

(ii)   The next step after arrangement of ideas is to put them in writing. Let students remember that one idea will be presented in one paragraph. This rule should be strictly observed by them.

(iii)   Within the paragraph all subsidiary ideas related to the central idea in the paragraph should be carefully selected and organised. All sentences in a paragraph have also a sequence and students should be trained to maintain the sequence while writing a composition.

As has already been discussed above, systematic representation depends upon systematic presentation by the teacher. If the teacher organises discussion through systematic questions in the classroom, and then develops an outline which the students should follow while writing composition, he can train students gradually to think coherently and write systematically. Like all other skills, the skill of systematic and coherent thinking is also a matter of training and practice, and if a teacher is conscious from the very beginning, he would do a great deal to enable his students to think and write coherently during the 4 or 5 years they are with him.

Sentences should at the initial stages be short and simple, and students should be discouraged from writing long sentences. Usually students have a tendency to write long sentences because they cannot think systematically and they get confused between one idea and another. They try to mix them up. Another problem arises due to their ignorance of the use of connectives, conjunctions, relative pronouns, and prepositions. For this purpose it is essential that the teacher trains students in the use of conjunctions, and other connectives, relative pronouns, etc. Grammar plays a great role in guiding students to write accurate sentences and write them in a sequence. By grammar, however, we mean the acceptable usage of the language, and not a knowledge of grammatical rules.

Selection of words and phrases is also very important. Whatever items of vocabulary are taught to pupils, the teacher should take care to teach the right connotations of each item. He may not teach the students all meanings of a word, but whatever meaning he teaches should be properly grasped by pupils and they should use the right word to denote the right

idea. That's why it is important that all meanings of words should be taught in proper contexts. If students are given training in the use of words and phrases, they would use them properly while writing composition.

2. **Punctuation and spelling.** Students in India usually do not know the use of punctuation marks. In most schools there is also no systematic effort to teach punctuation marks. In fact, most teachers avoid to do that, though they know that students will not learn them unless they are taught.

The teaching of punctuation is not properly done also. Let it be clearly understood by pupils that punctuation marks are also certain symbolic devices for representing graphically certain degrees of pauses, rhetorical if in speech, and grammatical if in writing. It is not at all difficult to give them a chance to observe pauses in a person's speech or reading or in their own speech and reading, based as they are on the grouping of words into thought units. Careful ear-training is, however, necessary. If students can observe the most obvious pauses they can be taught the use of full-stops (periods as they are called in American English), commas, semi-colons, and question marks. Certain rules of grammar can be explained. What is necessary is sufficient practice in the use of punctuation marks.

Spelling creates a problem to non-English speaking children and efforts should be made from the very beginning to teach students correct spelling. We have discussed in a previous chapter how necessary it is to start with simple words with regular spellings and then go into more complicated ones. Certain suggestions have also been given previously to teach students spelling.

All composition work should be thoroughly checked and all errors marked whether they relate to organisation of ideas, or selection of ideas and vocabulary, or punctuation or spelling, or any kind of grammatical errors. As far as possible, the teacher should not do the correction himself; rather, he should mark where a certain kind of error has occurred and ask the student to correct that himself. Emphasis should always be on quality and not quantity, and students should be made to realise that the more concise and relevant their material is, the more credit they deserve for it. The habit of writing long compositions

starting with a circumlocution, a long introduction, a long conclusion, and between the two, a medley of confusedly arranged ideas, some relevant and some irrelevant, but all mixed up, should be checked from the very beginning, because once a student picks up that habit it would be very difficult for him to get rid of it.

THE TEACHING OF GRAMMAR

The place of grammar. The subject of grammar-teaching has also been discussed in a previous chapter. Though at the initial stages it is not essential that formal grammar should be taught, yet at the secondary stage when students have acquired a good command of items of language, grammar will have to be taught. The process of language-learning involves a lot of memory work, though it is not rote-memorisation or unintelligent memorisation. The whole lot of language may not be easily learnt, and some kind of economy will have to be made—some sort of systematisation and rationalisation, some reduction to systems of the language material—which can quicken the process of learning. It is for this end that the teaching of grammar should be directed. Grammar does not help a learner to develop his field of knowledge ; it helps the learner to think critically over final products. It is not *in itself* creative. A person with all knowledge of English grammar cannot speak English as well as an African native who has picked it up at the dockside. The native learner starts by learning the language, not by learning the grammar of his language ; but when grammar has been taught to him, he uses his knowledge of grammar to systematise and rationalise his knowledge of language and thus gradually build up, and add to, his stock of knowledge. To enable the learner to develop the critical faculty in respect of what he has learnt is the true function of grammar. It is not the arbiter of language, and *it is not necessary at all to teach a student English grammar for enabling him to learn correct English, but it is necessary for enabling him to judge whether what he speaks or writes in different situations is correct.* 'Language first, and grammar afterwards' is a very sound principle, but to think that grammar does not have a strong argument to support its teaching would be fallacious.

Teaching of grammar. We have also discussed previously that formal grammar will not be taught in the beginning, that at the initial stages it is the usage that will be emphasised and not the theory implicit in it, that formal grammar will be taught after students have mastered a little of language, and that the method of teaching grammar will be inductive, rather than deductive. The following points deserve attention in respect to teaching of grammar :

(a) The teaching of English grammar may start as soon as students have acquired some measure of command over the language. It is not necessary to wait till students have mastered all items of language ; they may be introduced to systems as they go on mastering one system after another. Some sort of teaching of grammar will, therefore, continue throughout the duration of a student's learning process. Care has, however, to be taken that forms are practised first, and reduction to systems comes afterwards.

A question might be asked : If students have to learn all systems of grammar, why should not the systems be taught all at one time ? Let it be borne in mind that grammar is the analysis of the structure of the language—its anatomy as it is called— and, evidently, its teaching has a place only after the language has been learnt. If the child does not know the language, what will he learn the grammar of ? Though all doses in the case of medicine have to be taken as prescribed for a patient by a physician, not all have to be taken at once. A little of grammar only should go on all along the process of learning a language.

(b) The material at each stage will be determined by the items of language that students have learnt. We have suggested in a previous chapter the order in which grammar-material may be taken up.

(c) The teaching of English grammar should be inductive, and not deductive. Students should be given examples, then helped to observe and classify them, and then draw inferences or generalisations or rules. The inductive method is always superior to the deductive. Besides, it sustains interest of students, stirs up their critical powers, and makes them understand the systems of language thoroughly.

(d) In the beginning, the attention of the pupils should be

constantly directed to building up analogous sentence patterns, and to rationalising and examining the accuracy of forms. An example will make the point clear. Take for example the sentences : 'I am a man' and 'I is a man'. Though both of these sentences are analogous in pattern (*i.e.*, the pattern—S—V—O subject—verb—complement), yet the second one is not correct. How does the pupil know that ? It is his rationalisation that helps him to conclude that the first sentence is correct and the second, wrong. Analogy and rationalisation must go together. The moment we start rationalising that very moment we start getting at grammatical rules. Functions are not to be separated from forms and vice versa. All rules of grammar are to be taught as natural living parts of the language that pupils know. No rules should be taught in isolation.

(e) As the material for the most part for teaching grammar will be drawn from the texts that pupils use, the material for practice should also be drawn, as far as possible, from the same texts. In that way the teaching of grammar can be correlated with text, and thereby it can be more effective. However, as the text-books are not graded in respect of vocabulary and structures the teacher may not wholly depend upon them.

(f) All lessons in grammar should be thoroughly prepared. Teachers would do well by defining for themselves the area they would be covering. They should also decide what they would teach and what they would postpone for a later date. 'Should', for example, has 16 different uses in English, and a teacher should decide what use he would teach at a time and what he would postpone for a later date.

(g) The teaching of grammar is very taxing to the teacher. He should not only select and grade the material, but he should also think out the various types of audio-visual devices that would enable him to teach lessons successfully. Blackboards and folders are very close friends of the teacher and they should be lavishly used for teaching grammar.

(h) Remedial teaching and individualising instruction are very important in grammar. In the senior classes students come from different junior schools where the standard of teaching presents a wide variety. Some students may be well-versed in grammar, while others may not be knowing even simple parts of

speech. For teaching grammar one needs a more homogeneous group than for teaching vocabulary or text, although the advantages of homogeneous grouping are too evident for all subjects. In subjects like mathematics, science, English grammar, homogeneous grouping is very necessary. If the English class presents a heterogeneity and wide variations exist among the students, the teacher should organise remedial teaching for weaker students and try to bring them to the level of other students. The systems and rules of grammar are all inter-related so that a pupil will find it difficult to understand what a rule means if he does not know the base upon which it stands. Nobody can, for example, teach noun clauses if a student does not know what a noun is and what its functions may be. One cannot also teach the functions of adjectives unless one is sure that students know the functions of nouns. Each system in grammar is an inseparable part of the entire system of language ; and, evidently, all students must be taught systems only as they are comprehended in the light of students' understanding of the systems upon which they are based. If some of them do not know them, remedial classes may be organised for them.

TRANSLATION

As discussed earlier, translation does not have any place in the teaching of language. The traditional approach of teaching English through mother-tongue is very faulty though at times situations demand the use of mother-tongue for explaining some items of vocabulary and structure. Translation in the form of rendering of passages or sentences from the native language into English or vice versa, has only an academic value in so far as it enables a learner to translate sentences and passages successfully when asked to do that ; it does not have any practical value for a teacher of English. Translating skill is a separate skill—an absolutely intellectual exercise—and a person may be knowing two languages but may not be a good translator ; reversely, he may not be very proficient in two languages, yet he may be a good translator within his limited knowledge.

We have, however, to teach students translation not only because questions are asked in examinations on translation and students are required to translate sentences and passages, but

also because the skill of translation has an international importance. Today when nations are coming closer and closer and there is a need for inter-communication of cultures it is essential that we know how to interpret other cultures for our purposes in our languages and how to communicate our culture to others through their languages. The skill to translate has thus a practical value as well.

THE TEACHING OF TRANSLATION

Like the teaching of grammar, the teaching of translation will also have to be deferred to a time until students have acquired some command over the language. This will take about 3 years, and consequently, no translation should be included in the programme of English teaching for the junior high school stage. Exercises for translation should be included in the programme for language-teaching at the senior high school stage. The following points have to be mentioned in connection with the teaching of translation :—

(i)   All exercises should be based upon the principle—'simple to complex'.

(ii)   Only one pattern should be taken up on one day.

(iii)   All patterns should be graded in respect of their difficulties.

(iv)   Simple sentences should furnish the start, and sufficient practice in all kinds of simple sentences should be organised before complex sentences are taken up.

(v)   Students should not be asked to translate sentences in which there are words or phrases for which they do not have the English equivalents.

(vi)   As in composition, so in translation, oral work should invariably precede written work. Exercises for translation should be taken up in classroom, and students should translate them orally in the classroom before they are asked to translate them in writing.

(vii)   The teacher should give equivalents of words and phrases that students do not know. Care should, however, be taken that *appropriate and full* substitutes are given, for example, if there is a sentence in Hindi, 'वह हैजे से मर गया' and a student asks the equivalent of 'मर गया' the teacher should not say 'died' but say

'died of' ; otherwise the student might say or write 'died from cholera' or 'with cholera'. It is important that words are not given as substitutes in isolation divested of the auxiliaries they take and the inflectional endings they carry ; also they should not be given in separation from the appropriate prepositions that follow them. That is why the practice of giving substitutes for meaningful units is advocated.

(viii)   Model sentences should be written on the blackboard and students may be asked to refer to their construction while translating sentences orally of the pattern written on the blackboard.

(ix)   Sufficient drill work in the classroom is necessary, as it is necessary for all types of lessons in language.

(x)   The habit of word-to-word translation should be discouraged, and students should translate freely. The structures of no two languages are alike, and, consequently, the habit of word-to-word translation would produce wrong structures. Besides, in all languages the order of elements in the subject or predicate is different from that in other languages. Whether one would say 'I saw a red-brick, strong, beautiful, three storeyed building' or say it by putting the substantive expressions for 'building' in some other order would be determined by the traditions of the English language, and of no other language. The same would be true of all languages. In translation it has to be remembered that *we translate ideas and not words*.

(xi)   Correction-work in translation is as important as it is in composition, and the correction of errors should be done along the lines suggested for composition.

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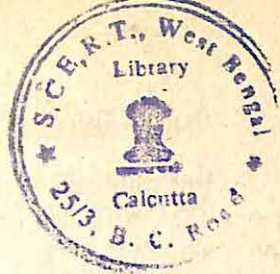
Teaching of Literature at the Secondary Stage

(Prose, Poetry, and other Reading Material)

INTRODUCTION

As has been discussed in the previous chapter, our main purpose in teaching English at the secondary stage is to give students a practical command of the language so that they can use it for communication in their life-situations. For that purpose a start has to be made with the basic items of the structure of the English language which have to be mastered by students within the range of a limited vocabulary. This programme should continue for at least 3 years and it is presumed that, if the teacher teaches scientifically, students at the end of three years will have a fair command of the basic items of structure, which implies a capacity to communicate with others within a limited range of experience. Gradually as the students' experiences grow and they become more and more mature, they should acquire a greater control over the vocabulary and idioms of the English language so as to acquire greater and greater proficiency in the language. The material at the secondary stage will be in the form of text-books prescribed by the Boards of Secondary Education because at the present moment there is no other alternative except use the books that are prescribed by the various Boards. It has, however, been suggested earlier that even at the secondary stage major emphasis will be on the teaching of English language by giving students greater and firmer control of the structure, vocabulary, and idiom of the English language. Evidently, though there would be provision in the time-table for teaching the texts prescribed for prose or poetry or rapid reading, the teachers at the secondary stage would do well if they devote a greater amount of time to teaching students the English language.

How that can be done by using the text-books prescribed by the Boards of Secondary Education, has also been discussed in an earlier chapter.

In addition to providing students with opportunities to acquire a firmer control over the language material, the teacher would also gradually introduce students to the literature in the English language. Teaching of literature implies a recognition of some additional objectives of teaching English which are in addition to the four-fold skills of teaching a language. As has already been pointed out earlier, literature is one of the functions of language ; it *is not* language, and, consequently, teaching of literature is our additional aim of teaching a language— the cultural aim as it might be called—and it involves the acceptance of the fundamental characteristics and needs of the adolescent boys and girls at the secondary level, who will continue with their study of the language material so as to acquire greater and firmer hold over the skills in the use of the language, and who will also study literature to fulfil some of their physical and emotional needs which have a strong appeal as they enter the threshold of adolescence and which can be satisfied by the study of literature.

Study of language so as to acquire a command of it to use it for communication is a skill, a habit that is acquired by constant practice and use of the language ; study of literature of a language is not a skill, nor a habit ; it is a taste which has to be cultivated and which requires use of the mental faculties like imagination and reasoning, and more than that, the establishment of a rapport with those whose literature is being studied. The primary purpose in studying literature is not the study of the language used by the authors, but it is to appreciate the forms of style used and the delicacy of thoughts, feelings, and emotions experienced. There is no doubt that one cannot study literature unless one has acquired a good command of the language, but a good command of the language does not necessarily enable one to appreciate the literature in that language. For the appreciation of literature some other qualities and mental and emotional habitudes are required which do not come to an individual through practice, but for which he

has to develop a taste which is cultivated much in the same way as all other tastes are cultivated at the secondary stage.

NEED FOR TEACHING LITERATURE AT THE SECONDARY STAGE

"In healthy natures" says Dr. Stanley Hall, the period of adolescence is "the golden age of life". The young nature crosses the threshold of boyhood and girl-hood and enters upon the vast area of adulthood, expanding with boundless energy, enthusiasm, emotions, ideas, and feelings which characterise the adolescent's mental and psychic set-up and which demand great attention of the teacher. It is an age which is marked by quick changes in body and mind. "The nature vibrates with new longings and resolves, deeper admirations and hopes, strange curiosities and doubts. The tumult and trouble of the springtide are in the brain and heart no less." During such a germinant period literature may exercise a very humanising influence by curbing the wayward and unruly tendencies of the youth and sublimating them for social purposes and ends. As the period of adolescence is a period during which emotions lead—the period of storm and stress as it is called—the teacher will do well to provide mental and emotional experiences through literature by which the moral, intellectual, ethical, and emotional interests of students would be kindled and diverted into useful channels. Among all the subjects taught at school, it is the literature that has the profoundest significance from that point of view and that can provide the necessary intellectual and emotional motivation by feeding those propensities of the adolescent which crave for satiation, and which, if not satisfied and handled properly, might leave him a physical and intellectual wreck. It behoves the teacher of a language, therefore, to recognise the needs and characteristics of the adolescent and to select and introduce suitable literature to students at the secondary level so as to satisfy the emotional needs of students.

However, it has to be admitted that the fundamental purpose of teaching literature at the secondary stage would not be served by teaching literature of a foreign language ; rather, it would be the literature of the student's own mother-tongue that will satisfy

their needs and requirements during that period. The purposes of teaching mother-tongue and a foreign language are very different from that respect. Moreover, in our secondary schools and intermediate colleges today we do not also have sufficient reason to introduce finer aspects of English literature when we find that a vast majority of students have a very poor hold over the language. The necessary emotional satisfaction and intellectual motivation will not come from the literature in English, but from the literature in the student's native language. Yet this does not set aside the claim of English literature completely. Partly for humanistic reasons and partly for utilitarian purposes, English literature has to be studied by students at the secondary level. Let us recall at this stage what we have at the very outset emphasised and which is that English may not be a compulsory second language for all students at the secondary level, but it should be taught only to those who have an aptitude for that and who can derive benefit from the study of the English language. And those who study English language must study English literature as well, so that when they take up advanced courses in English literature at the university stage, they find that the beginning made at the secondary stage was very helpful to them.

WHAT KIND OF LITERATURE IS NEEDED ?

Obviously, at the secondary stage, students will not be initiated into the writings of 'great' poets, dramatists, novelists, philosophers, essayists, etc. Most of the material will be adapted to the mental level of students and only a part of the original material of different kinds will be introduced. In the first two years of the secondary stage *no literature in the true sense* will be taught, because concentration during those years will be on language and not on literature. The text-books used at that stage will contain *adapted*, and *not original*, material so that students learn the language and at the same time get initiated into the area of literature. During the last two years, when students have had at least five years of English there would be sufficient justification for introducing short one-act plays, short stories, essays, verses, biographies, scenes from works of dramatists like Shakespeare—all from the original writings. Care has,

however, to be taken that the learning load is not too heavy and that it is within the capacity of students. Another point which deserves mention here, and is of special importance, is that the literature selected should be eclectic enough to cover the wide field of students' needs, interests, and capacities. It should be fashioned "with an eye,to all the leading types of character and proclivity—the intellectual or scientific type, the humanitarian, the artistic, and the practical. It must correct the exclusiveness and threatening narrowness of any one of them, and yet minister at times to each in its legitimate and peculiar needs".

The vocational needs of students have also not to be lost sight of. Study of literature should not only cater to the emotional needs of students, but should also be useful from the utilitarian point of view. The material selected should be controlled also by the criterion of a very close attention to the vocations in which those who are distinctively of literary bent of mind get employment—vocations pertaining to those of journalists, teachers, librarians, actors, public speakers, preachers, writers, lawyers, professors, etc. etc. A foremost aim of all education is to provide to an individual the ability "to pull his own weight" in life, and in selecting any kind of educational experience due consideration should be paid to this important aspect of educational objectives.

TEACHING OF PROSE LITERATURE

As mentioned above, during the first two years of the secondary school no original literature would be provided. All material would be adapted to the level of students' background in English and emphasis will be more on acquisition of a command of language forms used in the text-book and less on the contents, still less, or not at all, on appreciation of style. A clear analysis of objectives will be very necessary before a teacher would start teaching anything at any stage.

As discussed earlier, at the secondary stage, the teacher will enable students to acquire a surer control of expression and also to understand and appreciate the ideas, thoughts, and feelings contained in the lesson or lessons in hand. No dogmatic adherence to any single procedure is suggested, and a teacher will depend upon his own genius to invent a method for his students. Yet,

however, a few points may be recommended for consideration which will help a young and less experienced teacher in realising the objectives of teaching English prose in the first two years of secondary schools.

(i) Each day's lesson should be given in advance and pupils should come prepared with the lesson. They should read the lesson at home, try to follow the thought content and mark their difficulties.

(ii) In the classroom opportunities should be provided for reading loudly so that the teacher can teach students how to read properly, reading silently so that students can read independently with comprehension, and questioning so that the teacher can involve students in the lesson through discussion. Questions shall be asked on language as well as on thoughts and ideas contained in the lesson.

(iii) Before asking students to read, the teacher should explain the new words, phrases, idiomatic expressions, etc. if any, in the lesson. Students will not be able to read with proper pauses and pronunciation if the lesson contains many unfamiliar words and new phrases. They would stop at every step as an unfamiliar word or expression comes up, and this would disturb the reading process. The teacher of English will do well if he always keeps it in mind that a lesson in English prose at the secondary stage is a lesson for detailed study which means a study of the lesson thoroughly. Evidently, he has to teach students all new words, phrases, items of structure on one hand and enable them to read properly with correct pronunciation and intonation, and with comprehension on the other.

ENGLISH POETRY IN THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

Truly speaking, English poetry may not be taught in the first two years ; only very simple verses may be introduced which the students may read and enjoy ; but since the Boards of Secondary Education do prescribe poems for High School boys and girls, they have to be taught.

It is said that poetry cannot be 'taught' ; for teaching would kill it. Also if we teach poetry, we should not 'dissect' it only 'to murder' it. Poetry is 'a thing of beauty' and 'a joy for

ever'. As Coleridge said, in prose words are in their best order, but in poetry, best words are in their best order. Obviously, the teaching of poetry would be different from that of prose. The objectives in poetry-teaching are different ; the nature and characteristics of material are different, the forms and expressions are different in the sense that they might violate any rule or rules of the accepted usage. There are several difficulties which have to be confronted in the teaching of poetry—the difficulties created by (i) the form of the poem, (ii) the frequently occurring inverted sentence structure, (iii) complicated grammatical structure, (iv) figures of speech and condensed expressions, and so on. In teaching poetry of a foreign language the teacher has a special difficulty because of the unfamiliar setting in which the poet was prompted to compose his poem. How can he lead pupils to appreciate the poem 'Daffodils' for example, when they have never seen daffodils and do not know how they can 'toss their heads' or 'dance' ? It is for this reason that it is suggested that poems at the secondary stage should be of narrative type, simple and short, not involving difficult expressions or figures of speech. We do not think there is any justification for prescribing poems like 'Death, the Leveller' or 'The Solitude of Alexander Selkirk' or 'How Sleep the Brave' for High School students.

The teaching of poetry involves a bit of controversy. There are people who say that poetry should be taught for pleasure, and that there should not be any place in its teaching for detailed explanations of words, phrases, etc. The principle may be accepted in the case of poetry in mother-tongue, but it would be difficult to accept it in the case of poetry-teaching in a foreign language. Nobody can 'enjoy' and 'appreciate' poetry unless he understands it, and for understanding poetry some consideration for explanation of words and phrases that are likely to impede comprehension has a place. The teacher might not go into details of vocabulary and structure ; but he would do well if he stressed the difficulties of students and explained those points of vocabulary and structure that are likely to hamper comprehension. Appreciation can follow only then.

There are several methods of presentation of poetry as they are several methods of presenting a prose lesson. The teacher may start talking about the historical or geographical back-

ground of the poem, he may start talking about the poet, he may ask questions on the part of the poem previously learnt or a parallel poem in English or students' native language that students might have read. Whatever the procedure and method of introducing the poem, the teacher will read the poem for sound and have pupils read it nicely. Discussions of words or phrases or figures of speech, or appreciation-questions will follow only after students have picked up the tune of the poem and have enjoyed its reading.

If appreciation of poetry is one of the fundamental aims of teaching it, what standard of appreciation can be expected at the high school stage ? Since we have recommended only simple and narrative poems or even descriptive ones for the first two years of the High School all that can be expected keeping in view the mental background of students is that they should be able to read the poem properly, should understand the central idea of the poem, the prominent figures of speech, the metre, and the rhythm of the poem. They should also be able to appreciate the beauty of form and language, should know the setting of the poem, and also sympathise with the mood of the poet and say whether he is happy or unhappy, serious or jovial, thoughtful or emotional, and so on. They should be able to point out words that rhyme together, onomatopoetic words if any, alliteration and assonance. If they can do all this, we think that should be enough for High School students.

Short simple poems may be learnt by heart and students should be encouraged to recite poems. Various kinds of activities are there in every school in which students have opportunities for displaying their talents. Recitation is a very good activity in which those students who recite take pleasure, and those who hear get interested and feel encouraged to recite.

OTHER KINDS OF READING MATERIAL

We have discussed in a previous chapter the value of 'rapid-reading' material or the material for non-detailed and extensive reading. Suffice it to mention here that this kind of material should be improvised at the secondary stage—simple short stories, *e.g.* the Aesop's fables in the beginning and then gradu-ally introducing longer stories and then descriptive material and

finally reflective essays—to stimulate students' interest in reading and to build up reading habits. In a text-lesson the teacher is teaching students how to read and assimilate ideas, in a rapid reading lesson he is giving them practice in reading. Evidently, the practice-stage is equally important, and sufficient opportunities should be provided to the students for reading extensively. We have discussed previously how the teacher can help students in building up good reading habits. More and more opportunities provided to students to read independently inside the classroom, in the library, and at home would give students confidence, and will encourage them to read independently. But the teacher should not think that he has no other responsibility save the recommending of certain lessons and books. Very few students would feel encouraged to read if the teacher does that much only. He has to guide and advise students, tell them what to read, explain difficulties in respect of language if any, ask questions or set them in advance, give some assignment on extensive-reading material, correlate the teaching of text-books with that of books for non-detailed study, and finally check how much each student has read and how much progress he has made. This should not be done only once in a blue moon, but every now and then, if not day by day, at least week to week.

Since the purpose of this kind of material is to enable students to read with quick comprehension, and read independently as far as possible, the teacher should advise students as to how to consult a dictionary ; he may also explain words and expressions that students bring to him and that stand in their way to comprehend thoughts or ideas contained in the lesson. The responsibility of the teacher is, in this respect also, very great although it is a bit different from the type of responsibility in respect of a lesson for detailed study.

THE LAST TWO YEARS OF THE SECONDARY STAGE

In some of the States of India the Intermediate stage has been abolished by making a three-year degree course for the first degree of a university, and by adding one year to the formerly existing High School which, under the old pattern, terminated at the end of class X. In others, however, (and

specially in U.P.), the old pattern remains unchanged and there are still two public examinations, one at the end of class X, and another at the end of class XII, before a student is admitted to the first year of a university degree course. We do not propose to discuss what the respective advantages and disadvantages of the two systems are, nor does such a discussion have any relevance to the subject of our discussion. What we want to emphasise is that the Intermediate stage of the old set-up is also a part of the secondary stage, and administratively, the Boards of Secondary Education prescribe courses, text-books, and syllabi, and hold examinations for the High School stage as well as the Intermediate stage where it exists. Though in some States the High School and Intermediate examinations are also conducted by the universities, yet that does not mean that the High School and Intermediate stages are part of the University stage. They are, rather, the pre-university stages, and when a discussion of secondary education is involved it is the High School and Inter-mediate stages combined that constitute the secondary stage. It is for this reason that we have in this volume presumed that the Secondary stage, whatever the duration, is between the Junior High and the University stage. According to the new pattern it is of three year's duration—classes IX, X, and XI— and according to the old, of four year's duration—classes IX to XII.

By the time a student reaches the XI grade, he should have acquired a fair command of English, and, as we have observed, he should have read selected prose passages, a few poems, some short fables and stories in addition to English language which means a study of the accepted usage of English. His background in English should enable him to communicate through English, and he should be able to read English with greater control of vocabulary and a firmer hold over various forms of expression. Emphasis on language, however, even at the Intermediate stage, would not cease but more time would be devoted to various aspects of English literature so that by the time he leaves the Secondary stage he has a workable command of English language, and he has also studied some niceties of English literature.

WHAT KIND OF LITERATURE SHALL WE PROVIDE
FOR THIS STAGE ?

During the last two years of the secondary stage provision should be made for the study of some selected parts from the original writings of English essayists, dramatists, novelists, short-story writers, and poets. Care should, however, be taken not to include in the courses any material that might be above the heads of students. The purpose is only to open to students the vast field of English literature and to stimulate their interest in studying advanced literature at the university stage and later on in life. Students will not study advanced literature at this stage. All that the curriculum would include for them is a good sample of different kinds of literature, moderate in amount and suited to the interests and capacities of students at this stage. Along with material for detailed study there would be plenty of material for extensive reading.

The teacher at the Intermediate stage would try to enable students to become more and more self-dependent. He would guide and advise them where they need his guidance ; he would suggest to them readings and references, give them assignments, have provision for tutorial classes, and get them do as much work independently as possible. Written work would be more in quantity during the last two years than during the first two years of the secondary stage.

The method of teaching would not be very different from the one adopted at the High School stage. Certain aspects will, however, receive more attention, and of them the most important is the appreciation of the literary works that students read. But the programme of teaching English should not be very ambitious even at this stage, and, as has been previously observed, the emphasis on teaching language will remain undiminished. More and more opportunities will have to be provided to students for using the English language. The following will receive greater attention at this stage so far as the programme of language teaching is concerned :—

(i) Use of phrases—verb phrases, noun-phrases, prepositional and adverbial phrases, and so on.

(ii)   Observing economy in expression by selecting the suitable phrase or word.

(iii)   Idioms of English and their use.

(iv)   Synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms.

(v)   Precis-writing.

(vi)   Writing composition independently and freely.

(vii) Translation (as required by Boards of Secondary Education).

English grammar would not be formally taught as students are supposed to have learnt all grammar by the time they appear for the High School examination, *i.e.* at the end of the X class in some States, and XI class in others. But the use of grammar will continue and at the Intermediate stage students will bring their knowledge of grammar to tell them whether what they are speaking or writing is correct. By the time a student leaves the secondary stage and is ready to go to a university, he should be in a position to give proof of his active command of English knowledge and a fair acquaintance with the broad aspects of English literature.

9

Evaluation in English

(Teaching and Testing)

The term 'Evaluation' is used in modern times in a wider connotation than the term 'Examination', which is, more or less, concerned with testing the scholastic attainments of students at a particular stage or in a certain class or grade. Evaluation includes what examination seeks to achieve, but it does not remain contented with having tested the scholastic attainments only. It, on the other hand, goes much beyond that, and in addition, seeks to measure the all-round progress of students, and that too, against the background of objectives of education. Evaluation thus looks backward towards the objectives and attempts to find out whether or not progress has been made with reference to the objectives decided ; it also looks forward in as much as it attempts to diagnose the causes of failure to attain objectives and to find out methods and means by which success and better results can be achieved. Evaluation is thus not 'testing' or 'examining' only, it is, rather testing for objectives and it also attempts to find out how objectives can be realised. It is this wider scope of the term 'evaluation' that distinguishes it from 'examination' which is concerned only with testing the scholastic attainments of students.

There is another point which further widens the scope of evaluation and distinguishes it from the traditional concept of examination, and that is this : whereas the traditional system of examination employs certain dogmatic and mostly unreliable tools for measuring the progress of students, evaluation discards all dogmatic approaches if they are not scientifically suitable and accepts their authority only to the extent to which they fulfil certain objectives. Further, to make its techniques correspond to different objectives of education, it employs, not one or two, but several ways to evaluate the progress of students. It rejects all approaches which have the sanction of convention only, and

gives them only that much importance that they deserve by their efficacy to measure certain objectives. Its tools are more scientific, more valid, and more reliable. In place of subjectivity, it lays emphasis on objectivity. It does not leave anything to 'chance' or 'luck', but endeavours to devise techniques whereby an accurate stock of things can be taken so that further policies of action can be decided.

The traditional system of examination, though useful from certain angles, has been, recently exposed to severe criticism. This is specially because of the fact that the whole conception of education has today undergone a change. Though the traditional system of examination served its purpose under the traditional system of subject-ridden curriculum in schools, it is not adequate to fulfil the needs of a democratic education. Some of the major weaknesses of the traditional system of examinations are their unreliability, over-emphasis on scraps of information, no stimulation to extensive study, no judgment of students' real powers and abilities, no guidance or inspiration to teachers. It has, however, to be admitted that the traditional system is not all bad ; it has some strong points as well, and what is needed is not ending but mending that.

Evaluation rests on the assumption that all education is a process of some changes in the behaviour of students in the form of certain knowledges, skills, interests, dispositions, traits of character, thinking, etc. that constitute their physical, mental, and emotional set-up. Since education is not confined only to giving students certain bits of information and knowledges, a measurement of educational products in terms of the students' academic attainments, which the traditional system of examination does, (and that too inadequately), is not sufficient.

The desired changes in behaviour give us educational objectives which are basic to evaluation. Unless we know what we are going to achieve we cannot come to the point when we measure whether we have achieved that or not. There is no sense in going when you do not know where you have to go. The objectives should be crystal clear to us before we launch any plan of education. In the absence of objectives our movements and procedures would be haphazard, chaotic, and fruitless. After defining our objectives clearly we can think of the ways

and means by which we can achieve them ; we can also know the gradual degrees leading to the desired goals. Objectives are thus fundamental to any activity of the individual or society.

Coming to our main point—evaluation in English—we may repeat what we said in an earlier chapter in this book that the teaching of English has suffered, and is suffering, because we have failed to define our objectives clearly. A bare enumeration of the four-fold objectives of language teaching does not serve the purpose. We have specifically to break the broad objectives into their concrete equivalents—into specific skills and abilities that students are to acquire at each stage. Unless we do that we cannot devise methods for achieving objectives of teaching English. The clearer, and the more concretely conceived the objectives are, the surer and the more certain our methods of teaching will be. We have discussed this relationship between aims and methods in a earlier chapter in this volume (see Chapter 2). Our objectives should not be simply in the form of general statements couched in fancy language ; rather, they should be real, vital experience that give us at successive stages the 'feel' of their existence. It is for this purpose that each objective has to be explained in terms of the overt behaviour of students in relation to that objective so that it may be said with as much precision and definiteness as possible as to how a student will actually react, physically or mentally, when confronted with a situation arising out of the field of that objective. To illustrate the point by taking an example, if our objective is to enable students to acquire habits of correct speech, we have to be clear as to what we would expect a student to do so as to give us an indication that he has acquired habits of correct speech. If we lay it down, for instance, that when a student has acquired the ability to speak with correct pronunciation, when he can speak with fluency and ease while conversing with others, when he can discuss points with his teachers and class-mates, when he can answer questions put to him, when he can understand English spoken by others, we can say that the objective, which was related to acquisition of correct speech habits, has been achieved.

Evaluation thus looks back to the objectives when trying to measure the growth of students. It is concerned with the orga- nising of learning experiences that facilitate the growth of

students in the light of the objectives that have been laid down, and finally, it measures the growth itself, and in doing that, analyses results and sees how much has been achieved and how much has not been achieved and why. Such a broad concept of evaluation distinguishes it from the concept of examination, and makes it an integral part of the total educative process.

WHAT SHALL WE DO TO FOLLOW THE CONCEPT OF EVALUATION IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH ?

Obviously :

(i) We shall define our objectives of teaching English clearly. We shall look into the requirements of the syllabus, follow the opinion of experts, welcome the suggestions of parents and teachers, keep in view the needs of students and the facilities available at school, and then lay down as clearly as possible what objectives of teaching English at a particular stage would be.

(ii) After planning objectives for each stage—junior and senior—we shall spread our work over a year, and then for a term and for a month. In fact each day a teacher has to be conscious as to how much he is going to achieve and how that is related to the objectives that he laid down for each grade. Co-ordination of work and effectiveness will depend upon his co-ordination of objectives, and if a teacher can each day devote only a few minutes to thinking out as to what points he is going to teach and why, that would greatly add to the quality of his work.

(iii) Assessment of results is very essential, and if each day a teacher starts with some objectives, each day he should also assess whether they have been achieved or not. A formal examination may not be necessary but the response of students to home-assignments or their performance in composition and other kinds of oral and written work can give the teacher an indication as to whether they are progressing or not. A record in respect thereof has to be maintained and the teacher must assess students on the basis of their day-to-day work. Although in the public examinations the day-to-day work of students is not taken into consideration, the teacher may not feel discouraged, because he can surely do that in the case of home examinations.

The principals have to give teachers responsibility in that respect and see that with his co-operation and guidance they discharge that responsibility properly.

(iv) Promotion of students should be determined on the basis of their day-to-day work.

(v) The results of assessment will reveal as to which of the students need special attention and in what respect.

(vi) The teacher should not assess students' progress only by examining what they have written because written examination gives only a one-sided picture. One cannot know anything about a student's oral command of language, his speaking power, his pronunciation and intonation, etc. only by 'paper-and-pencil' test.   So the measuring instruments should be of varied types so that they can be used for measuring students' progress with reference to all objectives of English teaching.

(vii) Our purpose in measuring progress should be to know how much a student knows and how much he does not know. This is very important because unless we know how much a student knows we cannot know how much he does not know.

HOW CAN WE MAKE OUR EVALUATION TECHNIQUES EFFECTIVE ?

There is a feeling that the new-type tests and the new evaluation techniques are synonymous, and that when we talk about evaluation we mean introduction of new-type tests, (e.g. recall, completion, matching, etc.) and substituting them for the traditional essay-type tests.   Such a feeling is absolutely erroneous. As mentioned above, the purpose of evaluation is, whatever the techniques adopted for achieving that, to measure the real progress made by students as adequately and scientifically as possible, and to find out whether progress has been in correspondence with the objectives laid down, and if it has not been so, why has it not been so and what should be done to achieve the objectives ?   The concept of evaluation thus establishes a close relationship between teaching and testing and affirms that teaching can be improved by testing, and testing can be adequate and scientific when we know what we have taught and how we can know that whatever we have taught has been learnt by students.

The yardstick by which we can measure the success of our teaching is learning by students. Successful teaching results in successful and effective learning, and if we can measure whether learning has been effective or not, we can be certain that our teaching has been successful. If a teacher exhausts his whole energy in the classroom and feels proud that he has done his job very well without finding out whether students have learnt all that he has taught, he might remain under a delusion as to the effectiveness of his teaching. Quite frequently many teachers give long lectures, couched in fancy language and delivered in a fluent manner, but they are above the heads of many students most of whom are just passive listeners and who do not get any opportunity to question and participate in the lesson actively. This kind of teaching degenerates into a one-man's show who performs a theatrical hoax in the classroom without caring to sense the reaction of hearers. Modern pedagogy is against such teaching and condemns it outright. Good teaching is a co-operative activity in which students and teachers both participate, and the moment a teacher becomes conscious that he is evoking co-operation of students by asking them questions and involving them in discussion that very moment he is employing some technique of evaluation to make his teaching successful.

Good teaching and testing are thus associated activities, being two facets of the same activity, neither of them being effective without the other and without mutual assistance of each to the other. The present system of examination goes against this principle, and that's why it is exposed to severe criticism. Yet, as observed above, the traditional system has some merits in as much as it tests students' power of expression, their felicity of expression, and ability to remember facts and pieces of information, and put them coherently. Modern evaluation techniques give that system its due credit, but not more than what it deserves and attempts to supplement it for its weaknesses by not only introducing certain new techniques but also by establishing a close relationship between teaching and testing.

The criteria for selecting and setting questions, as approved by the protagonists of the new movement are as follows :—

(i) Questions should be clear and pointed. They should not

lead to speculation and guess work. Their scope should be clear and definite.

(ii) They should not be merely of a recapitulatory type, and should not be devised only to test memory. Rather, they should be so devised that they test students' power of judgment, their attitudes and interests, their actual command over language or the subject under reference.

(iii) Questions should be spread over the whole course. They should not be confined only to selected portions of the curriculum, and should not encourage a process of 'pick and choose'.

(iv) They should challenge the thought-process of students. They should be neither too difficult, nor too easy.

(v) The results of testing should yield certain positive conclusions. Through them we should be able to know what the students actually know and what they need to know. We should also be able to find out why it is that students have not been able to know what they should have been able to know. Good testing will surely improve teaching by exposing the weaknesses of our teaching to us, and by stimulating us to think of better organisation of teaching and learning experiences.

(vi) Testing should be a normal activity conducted in a natural manner without causing any emotional strain to students.

(vii) Students at each stage should be able to know what they know and how much they stand in need of knowing.

(viii) In a broad sense evaluation includes a measurement of the total development of the child—his physical, mental, normal, emotional, social, and spiritual growth. So far as languages are concerned, evaluation should reveal the total progress made by the child in respect of the various skills and abilities which language learning includes. It should not be merely a tool for testing his written expression, and that too on a limited scale.

For achieving the above-mentioned objectives and meeting the requirements of a scientific and adequate measuring rod it is necessary that—

(i) greater objectivity is adopted as regards the scoring by students,

(ii) more extensive sampling of materials is done,

(iii) economy of time is effected in administering testing programmes,

(iv)   reduction of students' guessing or 'bluffing' is done,

(v)   tests have diagnostic value,

(vi)   they are adapted to particular needs and conditions,

(vii)   their techniques and results are reliable and valid.

Evidently, the traditional essay-type of questions cannot meet the requirements envisaged in these criteria and, consequently, they have to be supplemented by some other methods which have superiority over the essay-type questions to a certain degree. But it should not lead one to think that the new-type tests are all useful and that they have no weaknesses or they can completely dislodge the essay-type tests. As has been mentioned previously, a judicious blending of the traditional type and the new-type will yield good results, and that both should be regarded as supplementing each other.

THE NEW-TYPE TESTS AND THEIR USE IN ENGLISH

As has been mentioned above, the new-type tests do not discard the value that essay-type tests possess. They simply aim at supplementing them so that the testing-programme is more adequate, comprehensive, reliable, and useful for improving the total school programmes. These tests also employ techniques of short essay-type questions, improved essay-type questions in addition to the two broad categories of 'Recall' and 'Recognition'. The 'recall' type of questions involves application of memory when a testing situation demands that the students 'recall' answers to the questions. If a question is asked, for example, on the subject-matter in the form : 'Write in three sentences the main ideas of...', the question is simply a 'recall-type'. Or, if an exercise of 'fill in the blanks' is given, that too is a recall type of question—exercises in spelling—completion or inserting appropriate words in blank spaces. The 'recall' type of questions is very useful in English and teachers can test various kinds of skills and abilities of students, and also spread their sample over a fairly wide portion of the curriculum.

The 'recognition' type of questions are in the form of :

(i)   alternative response, *e.g.* 'Strike off the preposition which is wrong in the sentence'—'He died of/from cholera.

(ii)   multiple choice—*e.g.* 'Which meaning is correct ?—

The word 'commendation' means—

(a) success (b) blame (c) praise (d) popularity (e) good fortune (f) blow.

Such questions can be used to test the vocabulary of students, their power of comprehension, their knowledge of English structure, pronunciation, etc. very successfully.

(iii) matching type—These questions contain two lists in which each item of the one list is to be matched with another item of the other list, *e.g.* Match the words in the following—

I	II
Dogs	bray.
Horses	bark.
Donkeys	neigh.
Cats	howl.
Wolves	mew.

In all these questions to save time in scoring the numbering of items is usually done so that students do not have to write the word, but they have simply to put the number of the right answer. For example in the question under matching type if the teacher gives the test in this form—

I	II	
(a) Dogs	(1) bray	( )
(b) Horses	(2) bark	( )
(c) Donkey	(3) neigh	( )
(d) Cats	(4) howl	( )
(e) Wolves	(5) mew	( )

and asks students to write the number of the words matching with (a), (b), (c), (d), and (e) within brackets against each word that would save his time in scoring. It is always good to give one or two examples indicating how students are to solve the questions.

As already mentioned, these tests are not the cure-all for all problems in the testing programme, and these and several other techniques, among which the essay-type is also included, have to be employed to make testing programme effective and really meaningful.

There is a feeling that such questions cannot test the critical faculty and the power of expression and appreciation of students. In this connection it may be pointed out that though we

do not want to over-emphasise the usefulness of these types of questions, yet the potentialities of newtype tests should be fully explored before any drastic statement is made as regards their weaknesses. A few questions are given below by way of samples for the guidance of teachers of English.

(i) **Objective :** Comprehension of a passage.

There is no doubt that a lot of confusion has been created by the suggestion that a foreign language must be learnt in the same way as one learns one's mother-tongue, that is to say, by the natural method. It is not true that the process of learning a foreign language is exactly the same as the process of learning one's own. The child's learning his native-tongue is subject to constant correction by his parents and others ; he has the benefit of the maximum number of teachers and the maximum amount of time ; he has the advantage of constant revision ; he learns through natural situations that are full of variety and interest.

Test questions :

1. Which of the following statements is correct according to the views of the author ? Put a √ mark against the correct.

(a) We must learn a foreign language as we learn our own.

(b) We must not learn a foreign language in the way in which we learn our own.

(c) We cannot learn a foreign language as we learn our own.

2. What are the advantages a student of a native language has got over that of a foreign language ? Write them in proper order.

(a) ....   (b) ....
(c) ....   (d) ....
(e) ....   (f) ....

3. Which of the following titles will you suggest for the passage ? Mark it with a large √ mark.

(a) Foreign language and mother-tongue.

(b) How to learn a foreign language ?

(c) How to learn a mother-tongue ?

4. Substitute one word for the following :—

(a) There is no doubt.   (   )

(b) The method of learning a foreign language like one's native language.   (   )

EXPLANATION OF A PROSE PASSAGE

(ii) **Objectives :** Comprehension, interpretation and expression. The purpose is to see whether :—

(i) The student understands the meaning of each word and phrase.

(ii) He understands the relation of one sentence to another.

(iii) He grasps and interprets the complete idea of the passage as a whole.

(iv) He can answer the questions related to the passage.

(v) He can explain the meaning of the passage in his own words.

"The purpose of school-training is not the acquisition of knowledge only, but is, firstly, the creation of habit of being acquisitive, diligent, obedient, punctual, truthful, persevering, and secondly, it is the development of a right attitude towards the matters of life."

Read the above passage and attempt the following :—

1. Some habits inculcated by school-training are written below :—

There are some other habits also which have not been described in the above passage. Now select the described ones.

(a) Perversity

(b) Submissiveness

(c) Intelligence

(d) Diligence

°(e) Not attending to one's appointments

(f) Truthfulness

(g) Falsehood.

2. There are two groups. The one is of words and the other of their meanings written in a jumbled order. Now you are to write the words in the specified space so as to match them.

Words	Meaning	Space
(a) Purpose	(a) Production	(a) ....
(b) Acquisition	(b) Object	(b) ....

(c)	Creation	(c)	Advancement	(c)	....
(d)	Development	(d)	Gaining	(d)	....
(e)	Diligent	(e)	Understanding	(e)	....
(f)	Various	(f)	Hard-working	(f)	....
(g)	Comprehension	(g)	Different	(g)	....

3.   Some phrases are written in column 1 and their one-word-substitutes in column 2, but they are written in a jumbled order. Now you are to select these one-word-substitutes and put them in column 3 as the phrases may be rightly substituted.

1	2	3
(a) One who prevents agitation and excitemet.	(a) Obedient	....
(b) One who works hard.	(b) Punctual	....
(c) One who attends his appointments at right time.	(c) Patient	....
(d) One who complies with superiors' will.	(d) Diligent	....

4.   Some statements are written below. The statements are either wrong or quite true, or partly true. Now select the statements and write Q against wrong, T against the quite true, and P T against the partly true statement.

(a)   The school-training enhances knowledge, produces good habits and develops a right attitude towards a practical life.

(b)   The main objectives of school-training are to create good habits and a right attitude towards the realities of life.

(c)   School training develops indiscipline and impertinence.

5.   Some priority orders are written below. Which of them do you think most appropriate according to the author ?

1.   To develop a right attitude.
2.   To enhance knowledge.
3.   To create good habits.

1.   To create good habits.
2.   To enhance knowledge.
3.   To develop a right attitude.

1.   To create good habits.
2.   To develop a right attitude.
3.   To enhance knowledge.

Towards what is the right attitude developed ?

READING OF ENGLISH

(iii)   **Objectives :** (a)   Pronunciation, intonation, speed.

(b)   To increase the vocabulary of the students.

(c)   Reading with comprehension.

(d)   Silent reading for assimilation of ideas.

Test for vocabulary :

1.   Words of group A have their meanings in Group B. Find the correct meaning and put a number on its meaning.

A : Biography (1) Intention (2) Hero (3) Incidents

B : A brave man.   Life-sketch.   Occurrences.   Desire.

2.   Underline the word that means the same as the first word.

(a)   **Detect**—remove, discover, overtake, apply.

(b)   **Inefficient**—unruly, prudent, incompetent, inevitable.

(c)   **Liberty**—benefit, seize, freedom, aid.

Test for the choice of words showing degree :

Read the following sentences and fill in the missing words needed to complete the meaning of the sentences.   In each, the missing word in a sentence is a form of the italicised word in sentence.

1.   I want to purchase a *good* book, but it should be———— than that.   Will you please show me the————one you have.

2.   Bombay is a *large* city.   It is————than Delhi ; in fact it is the————city in India.

Tests for comprehension :

A.   Some statements in the following sentences are not well expressed.   Put a cross (×) before each statement to show that it is not a good sentence :—

1.   Sudha told me the names of her sister and Kitty.

2.   He is happier than I.

3.   I asked him the name of the book he was reading.

B.   Fill up the blanks from the words given so that the sentence may give a correct idea :—

1.   ————is to cavalry as foot is to————(yard, horse, pony, man).

2.   ————is for woman as water is for————(love, fish, man, agriculture).

C. Which of the given words will be suitable so as to complete the meaning of the sentence :—

1. They were all there——Mohan. (except, accept).
2. Enemies will——the fort in an hour. (concur, conquer).
3. He is too——to walk. (week, weak).
4. The——were put to trouble. (men, man).

D. Underline the incorrectly spelt word and write it out again correctly :—

1. The boys were runing fast　　　　　————
2. Your views are incorect.　　　　　————
3. He is a god boy.　　　　　————
4. Come on, let us moov.　　　　　————

Pronunciation Test :

1. 'Birth' is pronounced the same way as 'perch', 'dearth'.
2. 'But' is pronounced the same way as 'Cut', 'Put'.
3. Below is given a list of words. Find out words with similar accents and pronunciation :—

Station, Rotation, Circulation, Motto, Potato, Tomato, Good, Hood, Wood, Nourish, Flourish, Devilish, Fiction, Diction, Sedition, Treason.

ENGLISH UNSEEN PASSAGE

(iv) **Objectives :** Comprehension and Expression.

In introducing writing start should be made with block capitals and transcription should form the first exercises. Then dictation should be taken. After dictation simple substitution tables are to be introduced. These tables are very good to teach boys and girls the order of words in the English sentence. Selection of sentences should be guided by the structures that have been mastered by the students. Simple composition is to be introduced after this stage and exercises should be within the experience range of students—personal experience or reading experience.

Test situations :

1. Make a mark on the sentence in which the italicised word has been rightly used :

(a) A good *transcription* is very useful to a patient.

(b)   We cannot *substitute* water for milk.

(c)   The bookseller has *ranged* the books properly on the table.

(d)   Old *structures* have to be rebuilt.

2.   From the following list select one most appropriate title to above passage :

(a) Writing Processes.   (b) Substitution Tables.

(c) Simple Composition.   (d) Importance of Experience.

3.   Arrange the following processes serially according to the idea of the passage and write in the specified space :

(a) Substitution Tables.   1. ————

(b) Transcription.   2. ————

(c) Simple Composition.   3. ————

(d) Dictation.   4. ————

(e) Block Capitals.   5. ————

4.   Strike off the unrelated pairs of statements :

(a)   substitution tables : order of words.

(b)   structures : block capitals.

(c)   English sentences : experience range.

(d)   simple composition : reading experience.

(v) Objectives :   Interest and appreciation.

The purpose is to see whether—

(i)   The student is able to read a poem with proper rhyme and rhythm and correct pronunciation.

(ii)   He grasps the central idea or the main points of the poem.

(iii)   He understands the use of certain difficult words and phrases.

(iv)   He appreciates the literary beauty of the piece.

(v)   He feels interested in some other writings of the same author and some other poems of the other authors of the same type.

(vi)   His character is influenced by some important points which affect his daily life.

(vii)   Students may write a composition on the subject.

Test questions :

Read the following poem carefully and answer the questions given below :—

Her arms across her breast she laid ;
She was more fair than words can say ;
Bare-footed came the beggar maid,
Before the King Cophetua.
In robe and crown the king stept down,
To meet and greet her on her way ;
"It is no wonder", and said the lords,
"She is more beautiful than day,"
As shines the moon in clouded skies,
She in her poor attire was seen :
One praised her ankles, one her eyes,
One her dark hair, love-some mien.
So sweet a face, such angel grace,
In all that land had never been ;
Cophetua swore a royal oath ;
"This beggar maid shall be my queen".

1. There are three titles suggested for the poem. Mark a tick on the most appropriate one :

   (a)   The Beggar Maid.

   (b)   The King Cophetua.

   (c)   The Beggar Maid and the King.

2. The word "laid" has the same sound as the word "maid". Select two other pairs of words which have similar sounds.

3. Read the statements given below. Write T against the statement which is true and F against that which is false :

   (a)   The beggar maid came with shoes on her feet.

   (b)   The King stepped down to greet her because she was poor.

   (c)   The beggar maid was looking ugly in her poor attire.

   (d)   The king accepted her to be his queen because she was beautiful.

4. The line "She was more beautiful than words can say", describes that she was very beautiful. Write down some other line which describes her beauty.

5. The words "laid" and "maid" rhyme together. There is a list of rhyming and unrhyming words. Mark a tick against those which are rhyming.

   (a)   meet, greet.

   (b)   Cophetua, swore.

(c)   sweet, face.
(d)   face, grace.
(e)   lovesome, mein.
(f)   royal, oath.
(g)   skies, eyes.

6.   Write in ten sentences the story thinking yourself to be the king.

7.   Who is your favourite poet ?   Name two of his beautiful poems you have read. Write down two lines of any one of them.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

(vi) **Objective :** To enable the students to translate from Hindi into English and vice versa.

A.   *Behaviour pattern :* Knowledge of correct English equivalents.

Test situations :

1.   In the following pairs of English equivalents a Hindi expression for each is given.   Check the right one by a tick mark.

(a)   कितने   How much ?   How many ?
(b)   चश्मा   Spectacles   Spectacle
(c)   सावधानी से   Careful   Carefully
(d)   सिद्धान्त   Principle   Principal
(e)   सुन्दर (लड़की) Beautiful   Handsome.

B.   Underline the preposition which along with the word outside the bracket corresponds to the Hindi expression tick-marked in the sentence :—

1.   वह कपड़े पहनता√ है   ....   Puts (up, on).
2.   वह लड़का हैज़ा से मर√ गया   ....   Died (of, with).
3.   वह अपने कार्य से असंतुष्ट√ है ....   Dissatisfied (from, with).
4.   वह डिब्बे में चढ़√ गया   ....   Got (inside, into).

C.   *Behaviour pattern :* Familiarity with correct English.

Test situations :

1.   Fill the gaps in the partly-translated sentences :—

(i)   ताज दुनिया के सात आश्चर्यों में से एक है ।
The Taj...............seven............of the world.

(ii)   हड्डियों का चर्म काला होता है ।
The.........of the negroes......black.

2. Translate the following word-groups into English and write the versions on the lines against them :—

1. मेज के ऊपर   ...   ...   1.................
2. उसके दोनों लड़के   ...   ...   2.................
3. काफी पानी   ...   ...   3.................
4. काफी गर्म   ...   ...   4.................
5. इसके विपरीत   ...   ...   5.................

The above questions were prepared by a group of teachers who assembled for discussions regarding the utility of new-type tests, and who, at the end of discussions lasting for a few days came to the conclusion that these tests cannot only be useful to test a few abilities of students, but, if they are rightly devised, they can serve as very useful and effective tools for measuring the progress of students in respect of different skills and abilities acquired by them in learning a language. These tests can also, as is obvious from some of the examples above, be used for judging the critical faculty of students and also their power to appreciate prose or poetry.

The questions on comprehension, interpretation, and appreciation are only for secondary school students. At the junior high school stage these tests serve still more useful purpose because during those years the teacher is not concerned with students' felicity of expression or their power to appreciate literature. All that he gives them is a good practice in the use of language and he can very often test what he has taught very successfully by adopting the new type techniques. As has been said in the beginning of this chapter, these techniques are good because they are more valid, more reliable, and economical. Although in certain items the element of subjective evaluation is not eliminated altogether, yet to a good degree these tests are objective, and, therefore, more scientific. However, it has to be admitted, and we have stressed the point above, that these new-type techniques cannot completely dislodge the old essay-type examinations which have a value for which they must continue. A good blending of the essay-type and new-type tests, *with a clear recognition that each is selected in view of certain definite objectives which it would fulfil,* will make our testing programme effective, and also go to make it serve the real purpose of education.

10

The Teacher of English

(His training and equipment, and His problems)

Three things are essential for making any one a good teacher, *viz.* he should know his students, he should know his subject, and he should know how to teach that subject. Knowing students involves a knowledge of students' needs, their characteristics, interests, aptitudes on one hand, and their problems, their individual difficulties, their specific requirements, and a sympathetic understanding and dealing with individual child on the other. This is the pre-requisite to make a good teacher. A person who does not 'know' his children whom he is going to teach cannot become a good teacher. Knowing one's subject involves a firm command of the subject. A person whose hold over his subject is poor cannot teach with confidence, he cannot inspire students, will fail to satisfy their curiosity or stimulate their imagination. If he is only one day in advance of students, that is to say, what he prepares a day preceding the lesson is given to the students the following day so that after the lesson has been delivered his students also know as much as he knows, he cannot be a successful teacher. A teacher can teach effectively, systematically, confidently, and inspiringly only when he has a good hold over his subject. Thirdly, a teacher must know the method or methods which he is to adopt for teaching his students. This implies a clear recognition of the objectives for which he is teaching, a formulation of policies and organisation of material for realising those objectives, the providing of suitable learning experiences to the students, and finally assessing the progress made by the students. Successful teaching involves all that and the criterion for measuring the quality of teaching is effective learning by students. If the teacher has taught and students have not learnt, the teacher has taught his subject, not the students. A good teacher is one whose primary devotion is

to his students and who makes himself sure at every stage that his students are learning what he is teaching.

There are certain maxims that every teacher should follow, whether he is teaching a language or any other subject :

(i) Recognise the personality of each child. Nothing is more conducive to building up good human relations than accepting that each person—be he or she, a child or a man or woman —has a personality that has to be respected. Much of good discipline in and outside classroom resolves into a matter of good behaviour and respect for each other. If the teacher is courteous and polite, has regard for every student, realises his sensitiveness and self-consciousness, respects his rights as an individual, he is building up that rapport between himself and his students that will produce the necessary emotional climate at school and in the classroom in which good teaching and good learning will accrue.

(ii) Being fair, just, and impartial is another quality which merits attention only next to the above. There is nothing that children resent so much, and that spoils relations between them and the teacher than a teacher's being favourably disposed towards some and unfavourably towards others. "Remember that you are dealing with pupils who have worked and played so long together that they are like a large family. And running true to form, injustice to one is injustice to all. Any teacher can cope with one subordinate ; no teacher can contend with a roomful". Be fair, just, impartial, polite, and courteous in your classrooms as well as outside the classrooms.

(iii) Respect for a student's personality implies avoidance of all those ways that are likely to hurt one's feelings. Sarcasm is one of the severe weapons that can antagonise any person or a group of persons any moment. That should be avoided and it should never be resorted to.

(iv) To command respect of students it is essential that not only a teacher's behaviour is good, but also that his teaching is good. For making his teaching successful, a teacher should never go unprepared to the classroom, should always keep children properly busy with pre-planned and well-organised activities, should not waste time, and should not allow students to waste time.

(v)   A sense of humour goes a long way to make teaching successful. Enjoy childlike pranks and do not keep a 'long-face' in the classroom. Let children feel that they are close to you. Let them feel free to ask you any question.

(vi) Faith in children's goodness is very essential. "A teacher is not a policeman and should not be unduly suspicious ; on the other hand, fairness to the honest student demands over-sight on the part of the teacher. You must, therefore, be convinced that a pupil has cheated you before you accuse him of it. No matter how suspicious you may be, say nothing until you have a proof. If you give a person enough rope, he will hang himself, you know, and you must not run the risk of treating a pupil unfairly".

(vii) Teachers can command obedience by pupils to law if they themselves obey the laws. For that purpose it is essential that they are loyal to the institutions, loyal to one another, and loyal to students. If they have a keen sense of duty, if they avoid all possibilities of friction between themselves and their colleagues and principals, if they are true to students, they are not only respected but adored by students. Loyalty to institution, loyalty to students, and loyalty to one's profession are the core of successful teaching.

(viii) Do what you would like your students to do. If you want them to be serious about their work, come to school punctually and regularly, behave properly, do not quarrel with one another, respect each other—if you want them do all these and all else that makes them good students today and good citizens tomorrow, set an example through your own behaviour. If you do not do that yourself, you cannot inspire your students to do that. Rather, on the contrary, you will be indirectly instigating them to expose themselves to undesirable attitudes and modes of behaviour.

All that is true of a teacher of one subject is true of a teacher of other subjects, the English teacher being no exception to that.

Knowing one's subject thoroughly is very essential to make a good teacher. In the case of an English teacher, if his own hold over the language is poor—if he himself does not have a satisfactory control over the sound-system and structure of the

language, he cannot help his students acquire that control. Learning a language involves acquisition of a great many skills and habits, and if the teachers himself is deficient, he cannot enable his students to acquire them. Much of the failure in reaching the necessary standard in English-teaching in our country is due to the fact that we do not have well-qualified teachers for the junior classes. A person who has studied the English language only for 4 or 5 years cannot have that command of the language and that confidence that is necessary for a teacher of English, without which he cannot organise his work and cannot inspire the students. It is unfortunate that whereas for lower classes a nation should have the very best of its teachers, in our country we have the least qualified and lowly paid teachers who have been driven to the profession only out of sheer necessity and who do not have either a command of their subject or a zest for teaching. If we want to improve our standards of instruction in English we should improve the quality of our teaching personnel.

Knowing the methodology of teaching is also equally important. If a person has a good command of his subject, but if he does not know how to adapt and organise it for different students at different levels he would not be a good teacher. Teaching is an art and success in it is achieved through good training and good practice. A teacher of English, like teachers of all other subjects, must have the necessary insight into the problems of teaching, and his training and experience should provide him with the necessary procedures through which he can deal with them. As mentioned above, a teacher should know clearly the objectives for which he is teaching, the facilities that are available, the rules and laws under which he is to work and the conditions amidst which he must apply his knowledge. He should plan and organise his work, coordinate it at different levels keeping the final objectives in mind, improve the material that is needed to help him, and follow the methods that are scientifically and linguistically approved, and that can yield the desired results. Teaching and testing should go together, and as has been discussed in the preceding chapter, good teaching and good testing are correlated activities. A teacher of English will,

therefore, go on assessing the progress of students, at least week
to week.

PROBLEMS OF ENGLISH TEACHERS

The problems of English teachers are tremendous—heteroge-
neous grouping, over-crowding in classrooms, too much of
correction work, wrong habits picked up at earlier stages, non-
availability of adequate material for teaching, adherence to a set
and stereotyped syllabus, preparing students for certain exami-
nations in which the day-to-day work has no value and that tests
only a few abilities, not all, of students, and so on.   There are
also problems of classroom teaching—problems like teaching of
different aspects of language, teaching spelling, correction of
errors of various kinds, problems of individualising instruction,
giving assignments, and the like.   In the preceding chapters we
have discussed several of them, yet we confess that the sugges-
tions given are not cure-all for all problems.   Each teacher has
his own problems ; no two teachers may have exactly the same
number of problems though in some respects they may have
similar problems.   Under any situation, a teacher is the best
judge to take stock of all his problems and to find solutions there-
of.   Suggestions are never obligatory ; they may only help a
prospective teacher in laying down the broad policies that he
will follow in solving his problems ; they will not replace him
and will never set aside the role of his commonsense and instinc-
tive genius to understand the nature of problems and to solve
them.

Some of the problems are beyond the teacher's control, over-
crowding in classrooms, for example, being one, lack of facilities
and material being another, adherence to a rigid syllabus being
the third.   Yet an intelligent teacher can look at the situation
again and again and say to himself, "Can I do my job better
under these situations" ? Self-complacency is a vice for a teacher
and nobody should think that whatever he is doing is enough,
and in whichever way he is doing that, is the only way of doing
that.   There are several ways of tackling a problem and no one
way should be regarded as the only way of handling that.   It is
for this reason that occasional conferences, seminars, workshops

etc. of teachers teaching the same subject have a tremendous significance. On such occasions people come from different situations and exchange experiences on problems which are of vital concern to all of them. They discuss their common problems and learn a great deal from one another. Such opportunities should always be welcomed as they afford useful opportunities for exchange of experiences and provide a forum for discussion of problems which are not found in books written on the subject.

An attitude of experimentation is very much necessary for a teacher. He should not give himself up to a rigid and stereotyped procedure but always keep saying to himself, "Well, I tried this, let me now try that." Situations today are changing rapidly and they are much different from those existing only a few decades ago. Under such changed and changing situations a rigid adherence to a set procedure would bring only frustration, failure, and disappointment. The teacher of English will always keep in mind this phenomenon of change and adopt an experimental attitude to make his practices suited to the challenging demands of the new situations. There is no gainsaying the fact that many of our problems in teaching are due to the reason that we have not considered this phenomenon of change in our school practices and we are yet, in determining of our educational policies and in adopting practices and procedures, the slaves of an outworn and obsolete ideology which we are not prepared to change or modify. Quite frequently, some people are heard saying that if a system of education was good for them and for their forefathers why should it not be good for their children ? They forget that much water has flown down the river since then and that the new situations have given rise to problems that did not exist previously, and even if they did, their scope was not so wide and diverse as it is today.

The suggestions that we have offered in the preceding chapters are not utopian ; they may be usefully adopted in classroom teaching. However, if situations demand that they have to be modified to a certain degree, we do not insist that that should not be done. A good method is that works well in a certain situation, and principles of a good method are just

qualitative standards to guide a young, immature teacher to acquire greater confidence in and experience of teaching and evaluating progress of students.   Good teachers are those who not only teach well, but also know their problems well and also have the necessary skill to solve them.

The Idea of an International Language and the Position of English from that viewpoint

The world of today is much different from the world of yesterday. Scientific inventions and discoveries have conquered time and distance, and people all the world over have come closer to each other. On the one hand it is a blessing to have wider knowledge of the people, and their occupations, inhabiting different parts of the globe, to have better understanding and appreciation of each other's ideas, to have greater co-operation of each other for solving common problems, and to feel more obliged to establish a common brotherhood of mankind based on the principle of universal justice, and peace and security for all. On the other hand, it is also a problem to have more and more people with different cultures and outlooks, speaking different languages, following different religions, having diversities in respect of modes of living, habits and behaviour, social and cultural backgrounds, to come closer to each other only to multiply chances of friction and conflict. The greater the number of people coming closer to each other with their hetero-geneities, the greater are the chances of mutual conflict and antagonisms. Unless some elements of cohesion bind them to-gether, something that unites them inspite of their diversities, some sentiment that makes them respect a common religion which is above their local faiths and communal or national loyalties, there would always remain a danger of conflict and disunion, and all our knowledge of science would not relieve mankind of that menace. A common language, not a language common to all people all over the world but a language through which people speaking different languages can communicate with each other, a *lingua franca* of the world—would go a long way to establish relations of amity and friendliness among

people and will secure better understanding of each other's viewpoints and ideas.

People have thought over the problem of an international language on several occasions and many attempts have also been made to evolve a language, or to modify or simplify one already existing, or to accept one language to serve the purpose of an international language, but not much success has been achieved so far. There are over 3000 languages, local dialects apart, in the world that are spoken today, and no two languages are similar as regards their system of sounds and structure. It is an impossible idea to have a language that can satisfy all people and can be accepted as an international language to be learnt and taught all over the world.

One attempt was made through *Esperanto* that was intended to solve the problem of an international auxiliary language, based on the common factors in some of the main European languages. Esperanto retains the essentials of the verb-system and relies largely on inflection together with some fifty prefixes and suffixes. Esperanto did not get support of the people, and consequently, was not accepted as an international language.

English today is the most widely spoken language, though French is a very popular language over the continent of Europe even today. Yet English is more widely used, and a person with a knowledge of English is a citizen of the world, as he can go to any part of the world and communicate with people for essential purposes. Many broadcasting stations use English as their medium, and it is taught as a second language in most countries of the world. English has the most up-to-date literature in various branches of knowledge and its contribution to world literature has been enormous. No other language can claim superiority over it as regards its popularity with people, and its wide field. If any language can be adopted to serve the purpose of an international language it would be English, and no other. English is the language not only of England and the United States of America but of the extensive dominions and colonies associated with the British Empire. It is being spoken by over 260 million people. Though it is not the largest language in the world because if the estimates on the basis of population are taken, then the Chinese language is the

largest, being spoken by over 450 million people. But the numeral ascendancy of English among all European languages is the greatest, and English has an advantage over all western languages. The importance of a language is to be judged not by the number of people who speak it but by the role it plays in international sphere. To quote Albert C. Baugh, "the importance of a language is inevitably associated in the mind of the world with the political role played by nations using it and their influence in international affairs ; with the confidence people feel in their financial position and the certainty with which they will meet their obligations—*i.e.* pay their debts to other nations, meet the interest on their bonds, maintain the gold or other basis of their currency, control their expenditure ; with the extent of their business enterprise and the international scope of their commerce ; with the conditions of life under which the great mass of their people live ; and with the part played by them in art and literature and music, in science and invention, in exploration and discovery—in short, with their contribution to the material and spiritual progress of the world. English is the mother-tongue of nations whose combined political influence, economic soundness, commercial activity, social well-being, and scientific and cultural contributions to civilization give impressive support to its numerical precedence".*

BASIC ENGLISH

An attempt was made by Mr. C.K. Ogden, formerly Director of the International Library of Psychology, Philosophy and Scientific Method, and founder of the Orthological Institute at Cambridge, and Mr. I.A. Richards, author of numerous books in English, to simplify English and, within a limited vocabulary, make it acceptable to people to use it as an auxiliary international language. Basic English as devised by its authors is "a careful and systematic selection of 850 English words which will cover those needs of everyday life for which a vocabulary of 20,000 words is frequently employed. These words are not the words most commonly used as determined by word-counts ; but

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* A History of the English Language, p. 5.

all of them are common, and more than 600 are constantly used by any English or American child of six".

The purpose of Basic English is of a two-fold nature. Firstly, Basic English is to serve as an international auxiliary language ; *i.e.* as a second language for use in the world in general communication, commerce, and science ; secondly, it is to provide a rational introduction to English, both as a first step, complete in itself, for those whose natural language is not English, and as a grammatical introduction encouraging clarity of thought and expression, for English speaking people at any stage of proficiency.

Of the 850 words the distribution is as under :

(i)   200 names of picturable objects.

(ii)   400 other names of things.

      600 nouns in all.

(iii)   150 adjectives.

(iv)   100 operations   (words that put these 750 nouns and
      850 in all.   adjectives in operation. These hundred
                      words include verbs, pronouns, pre-
                      positions etc.).

The exponents of the Basic English hold that on an average there are about 10 words in English for expressing one idea, and if a careful selection is made, then 850 words would be enough where a vocabulary of 8,500 (10 times of 850) is usually used. This does not mean that other words have not to be learnt. Basic English is 'basic' in the sense that this forms the 'base' by giving a working command of English, and it provides a rational introduction to English language. Since 850 words are not difficult to master, everybody can learn them and thus acquire a working knowledge of English.

The following are some of the examples where a vocabulary of 10 words is usually used when one word can serve the purpose, at least at the initial stage :—

1.	*Noise*	*Great*	*Say*
2.	Squeak	large	tell
3.	din	big	mention
4.	clang	huge	inform
5.	clatter	vast	remark
6.	roar	tremendous	declare

7.	racket	enormous	state
8.	hubbub	immense	assert
9.	boom	terrific	announce
10.	rattle	gigantic	reply.

(Although the words vary in their connotations, yet in the beginning, and in ordinary communication, their common, rather than specific connotations, need emphasis).

Basic English has its own grammar and it eliminates 'verb' in the sense in which it is used in English grammar. There are only five grammatical rules which enable the learner to get the most out of the vocabulary. One of these is concerned with derivatives in 'er' and 'ing' and 'ed' from 300 of the nouns. The exceptions to these rules are very few. Basic English has selected only 16 verbs and 20 prepositions to remove all mysteries of grammar. Thus for 'enter' it has 'go in' ; for 'stand', it has 'get on legs.' With the help of 20 prepositions it has been able to give directions to verbs and thus save the child from learning about 4,000 of them.

SUMMARY OF ALL RULES

(i)   Plurals in 's'
(ii) Drivatives from 300 nouns in '-er', '-ing' and '-ed'.
(iii) Adverbs in 'ly' from adjectives.
(iv) Degree with 'more' and 'most'.
(v)   Questions by inversion and 'do'.
(vi) Operators and pronouns conjugate in full.
(vii) Measurements, numerals, currency, calendar, and international terms in English form.

ADVANTAGES OF BASIC ENGLISH

(i)   "The real aim of Basic English is to meet every sort of need for a simplified English that history and circumstances have created."

(ii) Properly used and seriously taken, it can serve the purpose of an international language.

(iii) The number of words is small, and the words are also small in size. Thus Basic English can be easily learnt.

(iv) The grammar is simplified and nobody is got puzzled by the complexity of English structure.

(v)   It is also interesting.

(vi)   Phonetic difficulty is minimised by the choice of words.

(vii)   In its conception it is quite scientific, safe and balanced.

(viii)   It is a plan, in the absence of any other, to serve a purpose which is important.

CRITICISM OF BASIC ENGLISH

Inspite of the seemingly good points in favour of Basic English, it has not been able to gain popularity, and evidently, is almost rejected.   The reasons are as follows :—

(i)   Basic English is something new and revolutionary, and consequently, it does not win the acceptance of those who have their loyalties to the language as it has been, and as it is.

(ii)   It is regarded as 'merely illusory' for its claim to serve as an international language.

(iii)   Mr. French says that "just as the simplicity of Basic vocabulary is misleading, so is the simplicity of its grammatical rules.   In fact, Mr. Ogden succeeds in getting his English simple at the expense of getting it wrong."   (*e.g.* for 'stand up' Basic English uses 'get on your legs'.   Is it not ridiculous ?).

(iv)   'Basic English cheats'. It is worth noting that although the number of words is 850, the usage of them is so varied that the learning load is not so light as it is supposed to be.

(v)   Basic English includes those connotations of many words which are different from their accepted connotations in which they appear in text-books.   Hence it is not safe to teach Basic English if some of the usages have to be unlearnt later on.

(vi)   The grammar, idiom, and analogical aberrations of Basic English are all questionable.   The purpose in evolving an international language should not be fulfilled by amputating and distorting a language.

(vii)   The process of simplification of a language, as Ballard. says, should come in a natural manner, and it should not be imposed upon a language that is growing in its natural course. A living language is dynamic in nature, but Basic English is static.   The process of simplification should not ignore the forces of nature.   "To formulate a fixed system is like nailing up a weathercock to keep the wind in the west."

From the standpoint of a foreign learner, therefore, it is just one more dialect of English which will have to be learnt by foreign children to bring them to the level of native speakers in a shorter amount of time, but the purpose of an international language is not adequately served by Basic English because it is not favoured even by the native speakers of English.

Yet that does not reject the claim of English to serve as an international language if a choice is made out of the existing ones. There is no doubt that the orthography of English and its unphonetic nature are highly perplexing to a foreign student, yet with all the merits it has, and its wide range and area, if a simplified form of English is evolved, which is acceptable to native speakers, it would certainly realise the purpose of a long-felt need.

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